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ABSTRACT

This handbook provides a broad overview of the stages and activities to be undertaken to establish workplace learning (WPL) programs. It is designed to lead WPL service providers and employers through the process of developing a WPL program. Each chapter begins by stating the purpose and the outcomes expected upon completion. Throughout the manual are found graphic displays of check lists (a list of tasks that should be completed toward setting up a program) and exhibits (capsulized summaries of concepts and issues). Chapter 1 summarizes five basic steps in deciding whether to offer a WPL program. Chapter 2 discusses marketing and public relations. Chapter 3 leads the reader through three steps in meeting with employers: understanding the provider-client relationship, building a good relationship, and negotiating a needs analysis agreement. Chapter 4 discusses how to conduct a workplace literacy needs analysis (LNA). Chapter 5 discusses using the results of the LNA to develop a customized curriculum and design a participant recruitment plan. Chapter 6 addresses WPL program implementation issues: staffing, program guidelines and procedures, and program logistics. Chapter 7 on program evaluation covers the following: components of an evaluation strategy, evaluation issues, data collection methods and sources, an evaluation plan, data analysis and interpretation, and use of findings. Appendixes contain checklists, sample materials and forms, glossary, a list of 21 annotated references, and index. (YLB)

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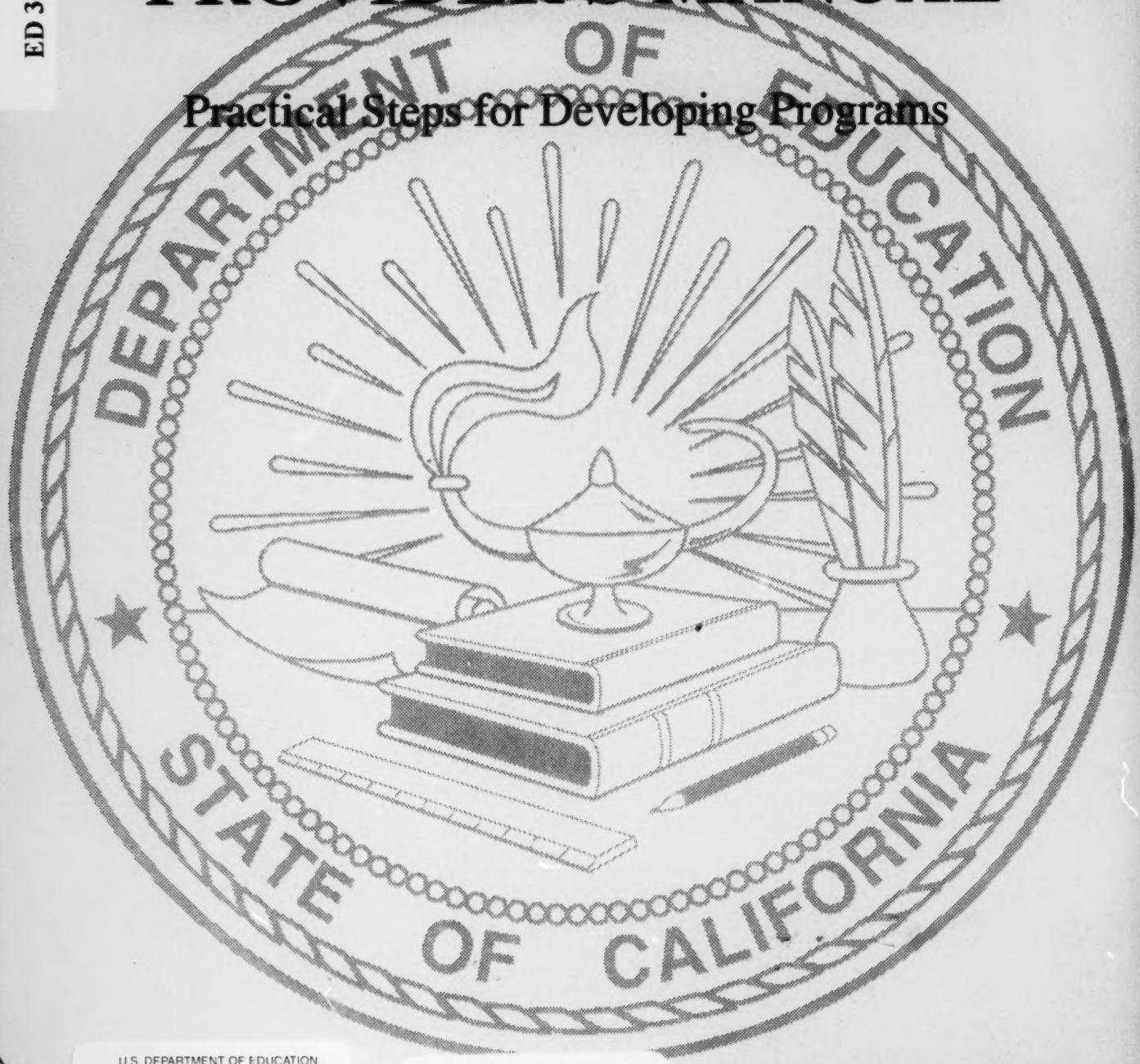
WORKPLACE LEARNING PROVIDER'S MANUAL

Practical Steps for Developing Programs



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WORKPLACE LEARNING PROVIDER'S MANUAL

Practical Steps for Developing Programs

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Letter of Transmittal

This handbook is the fourth of four volumes prepared to support the development of Workplace Learning Programs within California. The first is a *Background Paper on Workplace Learning*. The second is a *State Plan for Workplace Learning*. The third is *Implementation and Outreach Plan* for this state initiative.

This volume provides a broad overview of the stages and activities to be undertaken to establish Workplace Learning Programs. It starts with the initial design and planning of a program, progresses through a number of stages of implementation, and ends with approaches for improving programs after they have been evaluated.

This handbook is *not* presented as an end-all, step-by-step guide to running Workplace Learning Programs. Rather it is a distillation of literature and field experiences concerning the successful design and administration of these programs. While many may wish to read this volume in its entirety, it is recommended that readers use this volume selectively for ideas on how to proceed in areas with which they have least experience. The introductory chapter suggests how this might be done.

Ultimately, the success of Workplace Learning Programs depends on the initiative and skill with which providers of education and training respond to the unique needs of their communities. We hope that this handbook is a useful resource to support such efforts.

Sincerely,

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State Director of Adult Education

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Notice

The guidance in this manual is not binding on local education agencies or other entities. This manual is exemplary, and compliance with it is not mandatory. (See Education Code section 33308.5)

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Introduction

This paper is the fourth in a series of four papers produced in response to the State's Workplace Learning Initiative.[1] The purpose of the Initiative is to help key stakeholders[2] respond to workplace learning needs with high quality instructional programs for employees. This manual provides guidance and direction for developing and improving workplace learning programs using the recommendations outlined in the ***State Plan for Workplace Learning.***[3]

What Is "Workplace Learning"?

The term ***workplace learning*** **(WPL)** has been chosen carefully. It is defined here as programs where instruction is primarily at the worksite, curriculum is oriented toward developing literacy in the functional context, and learning materials are closely linked to actual work experiences.

The state's primary focus is on programs where the objectives relate to applied basic literacy skills that improve the worker's ability to function in today's work environment. With this definition, the workplace becomes a learning site.

What Is Not Included in "Workplace Learning"?

Workplace learning programs are *not* traditional adult basic education courses, vocational education, technical training, or job-specific training. The instructional strategies and learning objectives of these programs are different. WPL teaches basic skills in the context in which they will be used. They are different from vocational education, technical training, or job-specific training because they teach the application of basic skills used to perform job tasks and not the content of the tasks themselves.

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[1] The four documents are: (1) ***Workplace Learning: Background Paper for California's Workplace Learning Plan***, (2) ***State Plan for Workplace Learning: California's Plan for Adult Learning in the Workplace***, (3) ***Implementation and Outreach for Workplace Learning: Strategies for Implementing California's State Plan for Workplace Learning,*** (4) ***Workplace Learning Provider's Manual: Practical Steps for Developing Programs,*** prepared for California Department of Education by Pacific Management and Research Associates, Sacramento, 1993.

[2] Throughout this Manual "stakeholder" refers to: both public and private employers in all industry sectors, public and private educational providers, employees, employee representatives, and government agencies.

[3] ***California's State Plan for Workplace Learning*** will be referred to as the ***State Plan*** throughout this paper. For review of the whole plan see: Kissam, Dawson, and Intili, ***California's State Plan for Workplace Learning***, November 1992, prepared for the California Department of Education by Pacific Management and Research Associates, Sacramento.

It is also important to stress that workplace learning programs are *not* an "end all" to the improvement of worker skills or economic growth. They are an important tool, but they are not the only way to train employees. Nor can they have a positive impact on workplace productivity without other ingredients such as good management, employee motivation, effective workplace communication, appropriate tools and technology, and other "factors of production." Workplace learning programs are only a small part of what business is doing to increase their economic competitiveness.

What Is Functional Context Instruction?

Workplace learning programs are built on the premise that there is a connection between instructional materials, the learning tasks, and the skills to be learned.[4] It is believed that adults will learn more at greater speeds if they are learning for a clear purpose important to them. Instruction can be most effective when it is presented as a way of achieving a goal of the individual learner, delivered in the location where the learner needs to apply the skills, and supported by materials that are customized to meet that need. This is the *functional context approach.*

The ***State Plan for Workplace Learning*** supports development of WPL programs presented in the context of specific job materials and situations. WPL programs teach skill applications as they are actually used on the job.

Functional context instructional materials are not off-the-shelf course materials. They must be custom-designed to fit actual work requirements and situations unique to each workplace program. Some materials will be available from the workplace, but most will have to be developed by the provider. This requires time, creativity and resources.

Why Is Workplace Learning Important to the Future?

Workplace Learning Programs provide a strategy for adapting basic skills instruction to the needs of the future. Because they respond to changes in the context and demands of real work settings, they constantly adapt to the changing needs of our economy.

Skill requirements for the workforce of the 1990's and beyond will be higher and different from the past. They will encompass a dramatically increased scope of intellectual and personal responsibilities at work. They will arise from new modes of workplace organization and constantly changing technology. The basic skills required in the workplace of the future will go beyond "reading, writing, and arithmetic." They will also include intellectual agility, ease in acquiring and analyzing information, and personal flexibility to participate fully in a constantly-changing work environment.

California's workers, their employers, and the educators who respond to the rapidly growing demand for workplace learning programs have a

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[4] Hanna A. Fingeret, *Changing Literacy Instruction: Moving Beyond the Status Quo*, in ***Leadership for Literacy: The Agenda for the 1990s***, (eds) Chisman and Associates, Washington D.C., 1990.

common stake in developing collaborative programs which respond directly and effectively to the specific and immediate skills needs of the workplace. The advent of "virtual corporations"—strategic alliances among traditional firms to meet the competitive demands of new technology development, requires that education service providers build similar alliances to make "human capital" investments in basic skills as a foundation for employee productivity in contemporary workplaces.

It is critical to recognize that specific workplace needs are constantly changing—requiring that workers develop the facility and self-confidence to engage more or less constantly in ongoing learning. Here again, educational institutions' strategies must mirror those of the world of business. They must accept the responsibility for constantly reconfiguring the instructional content, methodology, and service delivery strategy as they respond to ongoing change.

Purpose of the Provider's Manual

There is a recognized need to respond to the development of the workforce skills needed by California's business and industry. The goal of the State's Workplace Learning Initiative is to develop ways for employers and educators to identify and address WPL issues. In keeping with that idea, the purpose of this manual is to present viable ways for providers to develop high quality WPL programs. The primary goal is to present practical steps for designing effective programs, and suggest ways to overcome typical barriers to quality program development.

Who Should Use This Manual?

Although this manual was written for WPL service providers, the information is also important for employers. It gives employers guidelines for determining what types of program components are critical for effective workplace learning programs. These are the components they should be looking for when contracting with a provider for a workplace learning program.

The main focus of the manual is services providers. This includes administrators, WPL coordinators, course instructors, program evaluators, and curriculum developers. It is important that all the provider team understand the vital components of an effective WPL program. This manual contains essential information on all aspects of developing a WPL program. This includes making the decision whether or not your organization has the capabilities to provide such a program.

For providers considering the possibility of offering a WPL program the information contained here is invaluable in aiding in that decision. Not all provider organizations are immediately capable of delivering WPL services. For those that do decide to offer services, this manual provides the practical information to most effectively build a program. The manual is also designed to be used by current providers, particularly for expansion or refinement of current services.

One of the manual objectives is to build employer awareness about the value of WPL programs. Each component of building an effective program, including the responsibilities of each party are outlined. As such, portions of this manual would be useful to employers.

How to Use This Manual

Although this manual was written with the assumption that the reader has little knowledge of WPL programs, it also contains sound information for those who currently offer WPL services.[5] The potential provider should read through the first three chapters and familiarize themselves with the remaining chapters before beginning the process of determining their ability to offer services. This will give a general sense of what will be required as you move through the process.

Current providers should use the manual to determine how closely their current program adheres to the recommendations outlined in the ***State Plan for Workplace Learning.*** This comparison is particularly important in terms of quality standards, program documentation and program evaluation. Further, current providers will find this manual helpful for reviewing all areas of their programs from determining community WPL needs to evaluating their program outcomes, as well as troubleshooting specific issues.

This manual should not be thought of as a guide for *Contract Education*. Contract education is a much broader educational service area. The general goals and processes in contract education are, in many ways, not as specific as those discussed here for WPL services. WPL is a particular and specific service, while contract education is an administrative arrangement for delivering certain instructional programs.

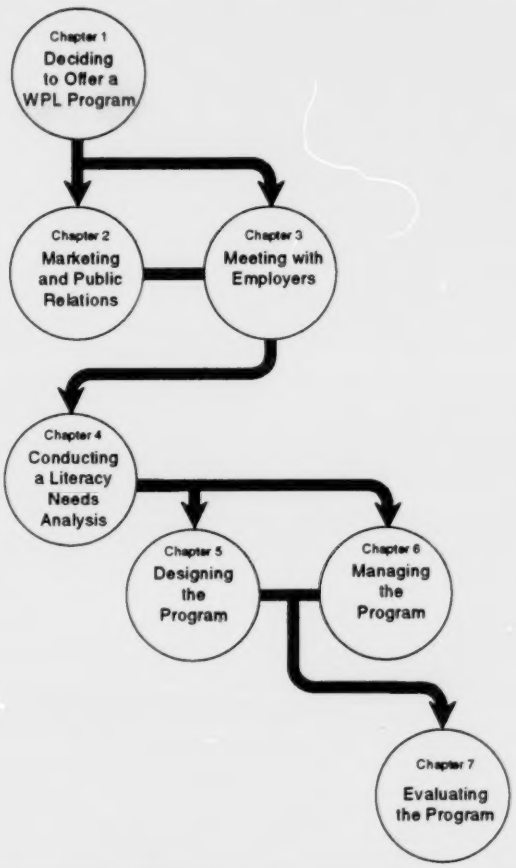
What the Manual Provides

This manual is designed to lead the reader through the process of developing a WPL program. Each chapter begins by stating the purpose of the chapter and the outcomes expected upon completion. Although each chapter builds upon the previous chapter, it is possible to go directly to a specific topic for review. (**Exhibit 1**). The manual also includes a glossary and an index for information on specific procedures or topics of concern.

The hope is that this manual will help to convey and outline the critical need for WPL programs to be effective. This means providing programs where workers are able to retain and improve their earning potential, programs that help the California economy prosper and provide an attractive incentive for businesses to locate and stay here.

[5] The manual assumes knowledge of instructional methodology appropriate for adults. For more information on instructional methods, see the Carnevale, et al., 1970, and Wrigley & Guth, 1992, listings in the references under WPL Implementation Guidelines and Manuals.

Exhibit 1 Overview of Manual



Throughout this manual, you will find graphic displays of "**Check Lists**" and "**Exhibits**". Checklists have a "✓" in the title. They provide a list of tasks that should be completed toward setting up a program (See **Appendix A** for larger copies). Exhibits, on the other hand, provide capsulized summaries of concepts and issues.

To this end, partnerships[6] are critical. They are the foundation of responsiveness to needs, accountability to outcomes and continued program improvement. They serve as a means to design and implement ways to monitor effectiveness and respond to findings in a timely and efficient way.

[6] Partnership, for the purposes of this manual, refers to a working relationship between employers and providers, not a legal relationship.

Chapter 1

Deciding to Offer a Workplace Learning Program

There are five basic steps to deciding whether to offer a workplace learning **(WPL)** program.

- **1.1** Exploring Your Community's Need for WPL
- **1.2** Identifying Your Organization's Capabilities
- **1.3** Bridging Organizational Gaps
- **1.4** Building Your Organization's WPL Capabilities
- **1.5** Making the Decision to Offer a WPL Program

This chapter summarizes these steps. The result of this chapter will be an Action Strategy to guide you through the next stages of development.

1.1 Exploring Your Community's Need for WPL

Once you decide to become a WPL provider in your community you are making a commitment to enhance workplace and worker effectiveness. To provide quality programs and address needed skills, a "Quick WPL Needs Scan" should be undertaken. This will put the program you offer in the context of business and industry[1] trends and employer concerns. The information you gather from this scan will be *one part* in the development of your organization's WPL role in the community. **Exhibit 1-1** illustrates an overview of a WPL Needs Scan.

The questions in the scan should be answered and analyzed to formulate an overview of your community's WPL needs.[2] This step will provide you with facts, data, conventional wisdom, and speculation about your community's economic position. This need not be an expensive or long drawn out process. Several well-placed phone calls to your local Private Industry Council **(PIC)**, and Chamber of Commerce can be very informative. **Appendix B-1** provides some sources of information for the WPL Needs Scan.

[1] Business and industry includes both public and private sector employers.

[2] "Community" can be defined as narrowly or broadly as you wish. The purpose of the scan is to gain a direction for your WPL efforts, not develop a demographic study of your regional area.

Exhibit 1-1 Quick Workplace Learning Needs Scan

Purposes:

- To obtain information on the WPL needs of employers within your community
- Forge an informed direction for your organization's WPL effort

Central Questions:

- How many workers are in your community labor force (number of employed, unemployment rate)?
- What is the occupational breakdown of employed workers (clerical, crafts, factory operative, professionals, etc.)?
- What is the industrial breakdown of employed workers (manufacturing, service, agriculture, etc.)
- What industrial sectors and occupational groups are growing or declining within the community economy?
- What are basic skill requirements for jobs within key industries and how are they changing?
- In which industrial sectors is the supply of appropriately skilled workers inadequate?
- What WPL programs are now serving the community and how well?

Outcomes:

- What are the workforce skill gaps?
- How extensive are the WPL needs in the community?
- What types of organizations have WPL needs?
- What WPL needs are being served and how are they being addressed?
- What types of WPL needs are not being served ?

The quick scan provides the basis to develop an overview of what types of WPL programs are needed. It should generate a list of potential areas of WPL to serve in your community. A list of potential areas for services are provided in **Appendix B-2**.

1.2 Identifying Your Organization's Capabilities

After getting an overview of what your community WPL needs are, it is wise to assess your organization's readiness and ability to deliver a high quality WPL program.[3] This means assessing the staffing, expertise, support services, and capital in your organization. This step will help you become aware of what resources your organization *has* and what it *does not* have for delivering a WPL program.

All WPL programs require an organization that is equipped to gear up rapidly to implement programs in an efficient and effective way. Appropriate procedures, budgetary control and access to staffing

[3] For specifics on quality WPL programs see, Ed Kissam, Bernadette Dawson, and JoAnn Intili, ***State Plan for Workplace Learning: California's Plan for Adult Learning in the Workplace***, Adult Education for Research and Planning, Sacramento, November 1992.

expertise are *necessary*. If these resources are not in place, you need to put them in place or perhaps decide not to respond to WPL needs.

Checklist 1-1 Organizational Capabilities Checklist

	Have	Accessible	Don't Have
Staff Capacity:			
Relevant Experience and Expertise			
Scheduling Flexibility			
Adequate Time[4]			
Workplace Communication Skills			
Subject Matter Expertise			
Adult Teaching Methodology			
Commitment to Functional context Approach			
Administrative Capacity:			
Flexible Contracting Procedures			
Administrative and Clerical Support			
Resources for Staff Development/Training			
Hiring Flexibility			
Ability to Respond Quickly			
Budgetary Flexibility			
Experience in Subcontracting			
Adequate Funds and Resources:			
Resources for Program Start-up			
Access to Expertise in Program Start-up			
Assessment Expertise and Resources:			
Job task analysis: short/long-term needs			
Data analysis, interpretation and reporting			
Cross-cultural awareness			
Adult learning problems			
Special population needs (ESL, illiteracy)			
Curriculum and Materials Resources:			
Methods for prioritizing skill needs			
Adult, job-specific needs of employees			
Strategies to overcome learning barriers			
Approaches to special populations			
Strategies to develop learner confidence			
Strategies to build metacognitive skills[5]			
Instructional equipment and supplies			
Linkage to Other Programs:			
Aware of resources from other programs			
Cooperation with other providers			

A sample of an "Organizational Capabilities Checklist" is presented as **Checklist 1-1**. Two results are expected from this Checklist:

[1] Understanding your organization's immediate ability to develop and deliver WPL programs.

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[4] While this is difficult to assess without having a program in mind, no matter what program you implement, staff flexibility is needed. WPL classes usually meet two to four times for two hours each.

[5] Metacognitive skills are skills, such as learning to learn, which are required to apply learned skills to new situations.

[2] Identifying areas where your organization must either obtain resources or make some type of compensation for what it lacks.

The purpose of the checklist is to guide you through an assessment of your organization's capabilities–its strengths and weaknesses. You don't have to eliminate *all* organizational weaknesses to develop a successful WPL learning program. Some weaknesses can be eliminated, others can be compensated for by your organization's strengths, and others you'll have to live with.

Whether your organization's weaknesses should prevent development of a WPL program depends on where those weaknesses lie. For example, you may not have staff for typing or mailouts, but you may have expertise in offering a WPL program. In this case the weakness will not prevent your offering a program. If, however, your weakness is having administrators and colleagues who believe your organization should not provide WPL programs, you probably should not offer a program until this attitude has changed.

Two areas of organizational capacity are critical. First, staff must have the knowledge, skills and flexibility to design and administer programs. Second, procedures must be flexible and responsive to a multitude of workplace conditions. Most notably, it should be possible to rapidly develop and approve contracts with employers.

1.3 Bridging Organizational Gaps

Your decision about what type of WPL program to offer has ramifications for the resources you need to assure its effectiveness. Targeting small businesses rather than large, one type of industry rather than another, or one firm rather than another poses different demands on your organization in designing and implementing a WPL program.[6]

In this step your list of potential areas for WPL services generated from **Section 1.1** is compared to your organizational capabilities from **Section 1.2**. Where and how needed capabilities might be acquired is discussed in the next section.

1.4 Building Your Organization's WPL Capabilities

The infrastructure of your organization is the support needed to offer a quality WPL program. To determine what you need to do to offer a WPL program, you should assess the match between your available resources and the requirements of the program you seek to create.

It may not be possible to provide all resources from your organization. You should consider alliances with others who have needed expertise.

[6] For a discussion of the barriers faced by small businesses, see Dawson, Intili, Kissam, ***Implementation and Outreach for Workplace Learning***, Sacramento, December 1992, page 6.

Examples of such areas may include services such as career counseling, literacy needs analysis, program evaluation or other services.

The benefits of an alliance include the external organization's reputation for competence, relief from the need to provide highly specialized services, and the objectivity a second provider can contribute to the process. These should be weighed against loss of direct administrative control, and lost opportunities to develop in-house capacity.

The key to developing the necessary organizational capacity is the ability to clearly define needed expertise and experience, gain access to the needed expertise, effectively monitor ongoing program performance and marshal resources to support delivery of the desired program. When needed capacity is not on board at the time of program implementation, the result is usually lower quality programs and a great deal of stress over implementation.

After considering the capabilities you have on board, the next step in deciding to offer a WPL program is to develop the program concept, and building the action strategy to make it happen.

1.5 Making the Decision to Offer a WPL Program

You should summarize the information collected about your organization's strengths and weaknesses, and the community WPL needs identified, into an Action Strategy. The point of an Action Strategy is to:

- Aid in making the decision about offering a WPL program
- Anticipate likely barriers to successful implementation

The Action Strategy can lead to a variety of initially unexpected conclusions. For example, based on the profile of businesses and employees in your area, and the strengths and weaknesses of your organization, you may decide your original concept of a WPL program is not viable and must be revised or you may decide not to offer a WPL program at all. If some provider is already serving your targeted group, you may want to redefine your target employer or target industry type. Alternatively, there may be providers already addressing some literacy problems. However, others may not be addressed and, in such cases, you could consider teaming up with existing providers.

An outline of an Action Strategy is presented in **Exhibit 1-2**.

Exhibit 1-2 Formulating an Action Strategy

Steps	Examples
1. Summarize your experience	
■ Identify your strengths and weaknesses for meeting business WPL needs	Administrator flexibility and budget flexibility to initiate and carry out a WPL program. Experience and needs expertise of staff in successfully addressing literacy needs in a workplace context. Experience of staff in cost analysis.
■ Identify likely opportunities and threats for implementing a successful program	Working with a large, single site-based organization. A program requiring staff who can travel throughout the county, and work for short periods at multiple sites. Non-English and English speaking program participants in the same site.
■ Identify how your niche fits in among other providers who focus on WPL needs.	Experience working with special learner subgroups, or with business needs, or achieving certain types of outcomes.
■ Identify target businesses: industry, products, likely management style, problems employers face and the role of literacy in them	Expanding or downsizing businesses, businesses undergoing technological change, businesses vulnerable to health and safety problems, customer-oriented businesses with many staff who are speakers of ESL.
2. Formulate Program Concept	
■ Formulate a WPL program concept and model for delivering services	Target specific types of businesses and educational, services; target different size businesses; determine if classes occur on or off site; and program emphasis—ESL, or something else; and probable course length.
■ Identify likely implications for your organization in meeting needs.	Fiscal support of planning, equipment, staff and staff qualifications, curricular and materials support, facilities.
■ Identify likely implications for potential clients when agreeing to participate in and with you in a WPL program	Effectiveness and efficiency of outcomes class and learner support structures, types of participation both fiscal and other with impact on firm, fiscal and other impact on learners.

1.6 Chapter Summary

Three outcomes emerge from the Action Strategy. The first is a list of the resources you will need to assure the quality and nature of your program. The second is a preliminary decision about whether to offer a WPL program. Finally, and only if you decide to offer a WPL program, is a basis for the publicizing and marketing of the program concept. This is discussed in the next chapter.

Questions and Answers

Q: This seems like an awful lot to do for one person. Is this really for me?

A: Small providers can offer effective WPL programs. However, you have to have a sense of the need for WPL and your own capabilities for delivering services. Without doing this work you are at risk for under budgeting and over stressing your organization, and equally importantly, failing to deliver what is expected.

Q: I already have a request to provide a WPL program. Do I have to go through all this anyway?

A: At least partially. You have to know your capabilities; the viability of acquiring needed capabilities; the financial resources to deliver a program, and develop an action strategy. Further, if you're serious about offering WPL services you should have an overview of WPL needs in your community. You should not build your WPL effort around one potential client.

Case Study: Deciding to Offer a WPL Program

At a recent community meeting at Pacific City, the Chamber of Commerce President, Jim Doolittle, said he thought the community should "get together" to address the growing problem of the need for upgrading worker skills. He stated that the State WPL Initiative included a State Plan for WPL, a paper on implementations and outreach for WPL, a paper on WPL throughout the country, and a provider's manual. He felt these were important documents to use in addressing the skill gap problem. He challenged educators and employers to actually do something to address the problem.

The Pacific City Adult Education Director Judith Reyes was in the audience and agreed it was time to address the issue more directly. When she is asked what the district is doing to address WPL problems, she points to the adult basic education, ESL, and vocational courses, but realizes these courses don't fully address the problem. She is one of several educators to take the challenge of the Chamber of Commerce President.

After flipping through the four papers of the State WPL Initiative that Jim Doolittle has brought to the meeting, Judith realizes she'll have to delegate the responsibility of sorting through the information to one of her staff.

Although she considers several possibilities, Joe Lozano is the ideal choice for this assignment. Joe is currently the supervisor for *Learning Unlimited*, which is the special projects unit of the Pacific City school district. Joe has managed a contract with the PIC to provide individualized remedial training for displaced workers and coordinated the district's efforts to run two sections of ABE under the GAIN program. He has had some past experience in the private sector through his job at a local bank. Joe is resourceful, a good team player, and was extremely flexible in responding to the changing demands of the PIC with respect to the district's performance-based contracting.

Judith asks Joe to study how the district can participate in the community's WPL needs. She suggests he begin by getting the 4 documents connected to the State WPL Initiative.

Gathering Information

During the first week of work Joe finds and orders the four State WPL Initiative documents, sorts through the various materials that he has accumulated on workplace literacy, and places two calls. One to a colleague at the local community college, one to the local employment training provider. He asks both how they have been addressing the WPL issues. The vocational skills trainer says that they try to stay on-

top of the ever changing workplace technologies and process. However, this is not always possible–they are limited in how tailored to the actual workplace their programs can be. The community college contact says they have several contracts to provide ESL classes on-site to workers. These are usually the standard courses taught at the community college. He's aware of the statewide effort in the community colleges to address the issue. He tells Joe that if the school district wants to go set something going he might be interested in a partnership.

Joe goes through the information in the WPL Initiative documents. He begins to understand the growing need for customized WPL throughout the state. He decides to spend some time getting a clearer picture of the community WPL needs. He uses the *WPL Needs Scan* (from the ***Manual***) as a guide for digging up information. He looks over some of the standard data. The usual information from EDD projects occupational demand by DOT code and the Economic Development Board has good medium-term projections about industrial growth. But neither tell him much about what kinds of problems employers are having with the skills of employees who are currently employed. As suggested in the ***Manual*** Joe begins to place several calls within his community and at the state level to gather information. He calls Jim Doolittle at the Chamber of Commerce, his contacts at the local PIC, the state WPL consultant for CDE, and EDD. He reads the local business section routinely. He arranges to have lunch with the manager of one of the local banks who has a good track record of community involvement.

At lunch, Joe learns from the banker that the large electronics manufacturer in town is moving to a new quality control technology, but from what he knows of the corporate strategy, the central office has been adamant that the firm meet its own training needs. But he recommends that Joe call the personnel manager to gather information. They also talk about potential workplace training in the financial sector that seems interesting.

Finally, they discuss Pacific City's construction industry. The city is developing three new industrial parks and construction of single-family homes, townhouses and condominiums is increasing rapidly. The bank manager suggests that Joe call Sam Layton, a project coordinator with one of the large development consortia.

In the third week, Joe calls the three financial, construction, electronics contacts. His contacts seem pleased that adult education is interested in their business needs and spend time talking about their perceptions–as well as referring him to others they consider to be knowledgeable. Joe needs to sort through the information he has gathered and assess the recommendations for the Director. The final area to examine is his organizations capabilities to participate in a WPL program. Again, using the ***Manual***, he begins to review this information.

The large electronics firm is moving to a new quality control technology, and the change-over is scheduled to begin in 10 months. However, none of the *Learning Unlimited* staff are familiar with the technology or likely to become familiar with it since it is an expensive, proprietary quality control system. The demand for worker upgrades in the financial industry is also substantial. Joe suspects the community college may be better positioned to meet these demands because it has offered a wide range of courses in office technology for several years.

Joe focuses on the construction industry. From the initial WPL Scan, he finds that the current large-scale projects are placing new demands on the industry. Specifically, in project planning, complying with regulatory standards in energy efficiency and land use, and in using new technologies in surveying.

An important factor in the construction industry is that a very high proportion of the workforce consists of Mexican immigrants with limited English-speaking skills and limited education. Joe knows from his experience in PIC-sponsored projects and GAIN that the *Learning Unlimited* staff and the district staff are especially trained in dealing with this population.

Joe notes that the district will have to gain a reputation for these types of WPL services. He decides that the Director will need to help in further assessment of their organization's capabilities to deliver quality services.

Making the Decision

As scheduled, Joe meets with the Director. He goes through his findings on the *WPL Needs Scan* and reviews all of the information he has collected. He then presents his recommendation to target limited English workers in construction.

The Director agrees that putting together a WPL initiative targeting limited-English workers in the construction industry seems a good idea, but it will severely strain the resources of the existing program. The other problem may be that because the construction industry is operating with very thin profit margins, they may be reluctant to support a WPL program, particularly if there is high turnover. There are two big

questions: Are training investments justified? Will the payoff be worth the investment?

Joe states that it will probably be necessary for the district to contract with an experienced organization to conduct the LNA. The issue of program evaluation is key to building a strong workplace effort but it is an area where neither he nor the program staff have any expertise. The issue of customizing a curriculum is one which Joe feels familiar with and knows how challenging it can be. Perhaps some help will be needed in that area. Because these expenses would be built into the cost of delivering a program to an employer, they decide to re-examine these issues more carefully once a program initiative is formulated.

The district will need to provide some resources up front for marketing, staff training, orientation and meetings with potential clients.

After the Director meets with the Superintendent, he makes a summary report to the Board and concurrently gives his approval for the *Learning Unlimited* to go ahead and build a WPL initiative–with the understanding that Joe will devote no more than 20% of his time to the effort and that the program report back to him within 3 months on its progress.

Learning Unlimited has made its decision–to go ahead. And it is now well-poised to begin the difficult work of converting a good idea into reality.

Chapter 2

Marketing and Public Relations

There are two possible barriers to identifying potential clients. First, is the level of employer awareness regarding the need for workers to improve their literacy skills. Second, is the level of awareness among employers that your organization can provide the needed services. This is where public relations and marketing efforts begin to take shape. They are two different processes:

- **Marketing** aims to attract specific businesses or employers to become your WPL client. The focus is on promoting your organization's ability to deliver a WPL program. You're focusing on establishing the need for your services. Your efforts are directed specifically to the employers or businesses you hope to interest in using your services.

- **Public Relations** deals with creating positive awareness of your organization. The focus is on building awareness about the benefits of enhancing employees' literacy at the worksite. You're focusing on establishing a need for WPL services within the community at large.

This chapter discusses both types of activities. Sections include:

2.1 Developing and Implementing a Marketing Strategy

2.2 Informing Your Own Organization

2.3 Developing a Public Relations Strategy

2.4 Assessing Outcomes from Public Relations and Marketing

There are five expected outcomes: **[1]** a strategy for marketing your services, **[2]** identification of potential partners with whom to offer a WPL program, **[3]** a strategy for increasing awareness of WPL services within your own organization, **[4]** a strategy for public relations if needed, and **[5]** criteria for assessing outcomes from the marketing and public relations activities.[1]

[1]Public relations and marketing also are discussed in the associated document, ***Implementation and Outreach for Workplace Learning***, submitted to Adult Education and Job Training Unit, Youth, Adult and Alternative Education Services Division, California Department of Education, prepared by the Adult Education Institute for Research and Planning, Sacramento, California, December, 1992.

2.1 Developing a Marketing Strategy

Marketing strategies include development of materials representing your program, presentation and follow-up to develop a WPL contract with an employer or worker organization. Activities include using the telephone, paper and personal presentations to organizational representatives either in response to some indication of interest or because you feel they might be interested.

Exhibit 2-1 Information to Provide Employers

How the WPL program operates:
- With professional and trained staff–teamwork
- Designed specifically to master job-related literacy objectives
- Developed to enhance worker productivity and profit
- Taught by staff familiar with workplace needs
- Guided by quality standards[a]
- Curriculum customized to meet workplace needs
- Steps in agreeing to set up such a program
- Means to evaluate program success

Types of needs addressed through WPL programs:
- Employee-customer-supervisor communication in English
- Learning to learn skills
- Employee-communication and problem-solving
- Basic skills needed for technology and work procedures

Types of outcomes and program effectiveness:
- More highly effective and motivated employees
- Reduction of waste and accidents
- Increased worker productivity[b]
- Increased capability for cross trained employees

Cost and benefits of program:
- Factors effecting cost
- Activities and benefits associated with cost

Implementation issues:
- Roles and responsibilities of implementation partners
- Workplace disruption associated with the program
- Program participant recruitment and reaction

Previous experience in offering similar programs:
- Endorsements of program utility
- Types of programs offered previously and their results

Your organization's identity:
- Logo, or other quick identifier for your organization
- Title of program, contact person, phone number, address

NOTE: Some information may be in the brochure; some may be stated in person
a ***State Plan for Workplace Learning***, op. cit.
b Do not indicate more than you can achieve.

While the scope of your marketing activities will vary based on your organization's capabilities and marketing needs, there are three central elements of any strategy. These are **[1]** development of materials, **[2]** circulation and **[3]** follow-up. Development of materials refers to the formulation of the content of presentations and the organization of its delivery and the development of ancillary support materials including

oral presentations, brochures and other written materials about your organization. Circulation refers to the type of organization and position within an organization you are marketing to. Follow-up refers to obtaining reaction to your presentations and moving to more serious WPL program negotiation. Features of a good strategy are: **[1]** anticipating issues of concern to target audience, **[2]** sending your message to the right people–those who can take actions you want, and **[3]** including feedback mechanisms in your marketing strategy.

Based on the information you have from the WPL Needs Scan, issues of concern should be identified, along with the recipients for the marketing message—the person who can influence and make decisions about offering such a program. Specific industry sectors or recipients within an audience—employer, employee, union representative should receive information appropriate to them.[2] Incorporate feedback mechanisms in marketing–your phone number to encourage calls. Specific types of information you should be able to provide employers are outlined in **Exhibit 2-1**. **Appendix C-1** provides an example of a request for proposals for a WPL program that may come from an employer.

The actual information included in your message will differ based on your audience. An outline of materials and the content of a sample presentation are displayed in **Appendix C-2**.

You will never be thoroughly informed about your audience. A marketing strategy should help you get information about your audience. This is discussed in **Section 2.4**.

2.2 Informing Your Own Organization

To have a successful external marketing effort, your organization has to be informed and speak with a single voice about what you can offer as services. The implications of this requirement are presented in **Checklist 2-1.**

It is imperative that provider staff in your organization be aware of the WPL program and know to whom to refer calls. Staff in and outside your group should be apprised of marketing activities, and the appropriate response to requests for information. Equipping staff with a script to respond to calls may be useful. It is crucial that staff are trained to respond knowledgeably. Any requests for assistance not fielded appropriately represent likely loss of a client.

[2] Examples of concerns could be cost of program, amount of disruption in work, types of outcomes a client can expect.

Checklist 2-1 Elements of an Internal Marketing Strategy

- ☐ **Clarify responsibility. Can the WPL program manager:**
  - ☐ Offer a specific service/program for your organization?
  - ☐ If not able to personally commit your organization, locate a person who can, and obtain approval quickly?
- ☐ **Identify resources. Do you know about:**
  - ☐ Staff, outside your group, who could contribute to your program in assessment, specific curricular areas, experience teaching certain learner profiles?
  - ☐ Equipment available to augment your program (and how access to it might be afforded)?
  - ☐ Materials or services developed for other purposes that might be useful for your program (*e.g.* for addressing specific language needs, child care, or transportation needs)?
- ☐ **Inform your organization. Are you sure that:**
  - ☐ Others in your organization know about the services you offer, and do not turn away the call?
  - ☐ Others in the organization know who should receive the call, and will transfer the call promptly?
  - ☐ The description of the services you offer, by your program staff, is consistent, professional, and clear?
- ☐ **Train your staff. Are the staff sufficiently:**
  - ☐ Knowledgeable about your program and organizational capabilities to respond to inquiries productively?
  - ☐ Oriented to the workplace to represent the your services ?
  - ☐ Knowledgeable of adult learning issues and implications for learner support in the workplace?
  - ☐ Able to recognize basic skills embedded in workplace tasks?

2.3 Developing a Public Relations Strategy

Your business community may already have a good sense of WPL needs. If employers and community leaders don't demonstrate an understanding of the need for improving worker literacy, then it is in your best interest to build their awareness. It may require that you establish the demand and point out the benefits of *your* services.

You should answer the question, Do I Need to Develop a Public Relations Strategy? The answer should come from the Quick WPL Needs Scan. **Exhibit 2-2** highlights the issues to examine. Before designing a strategy, you should take into account any ongoing state level WPL publicity campaigns.

Exhibit 2-2 Criteria to Determine Need for a Public Relations

How informed is the community about worker literacy?

- How many public service announcements are there on TV or radio, focused on workers' skills?
- What type of employer sponsored enrollment does your adult school, non-credit program, or volunteer program have?
- Are community services organizations aware of your program?

How receptive are employers to WPL in their organizations?

- How many other providers of WPL are in the community?
- How many inquiries have you received regarding WPL?
- How many providers are currently providing services on site?
- What level of training is provided in existing WPL programs?

How is your organization viewed in the community?

- Past ventures with employers or union representatives?
- Do you have credibility as a flexible, innovative provider?

While a public relations strategy will vary based on the size of your organization and the nature of your community, all strategies have a similar design. You target a message for a particular audience and a method for delivering the message.[3] Your efforts should influence interest in and attitude toward improved WPL skills (**Exhibit 2-3**).

Exhibit 2-3 Outline for a Public Relations Strategy

Public Relations Goals:

- To build awareness about the need for improved worker literacy (Use Quick Scan in **Chapter 1**)
- To build awareness about your organization as a WPL provider (Use Organizational Capabilities Checklist in **Chapter 1**)

Activities:

- Types of activities to use (*e.g.* public service announcements on radio, advertisements, brochures, mass mailing, presentations)
- Types of activities for specific segments (*e.g.* small employers, unions or community at large)

Expected Outcomes:

- General understanding that WPL is a viable vehicle for improving workplace performance (overall),
- Recognition of need for and benefits from participating in a WPL program (employees)
- Recognize your organization's name as a credible provider of WPL services (overall goal),
- Telephone calls from employers or unions for assistance with WPL programs (target audience goal),
- Recognition of, or willingness to examine, need for WPL at an organization's site (employers, unions)

Community Context Characteristics:

- Demographics of the community and labor force
- Type of learning and literacy needs identified
- Type of organizations in need of a WPL program

Because public relations takes time and money, consideration should be given to the level of effort needed. If your organization is small and

[3] ***Implementation and Outreach*, op. cit.**, Marketing Matrix, page 3-8

resources are limited, you may not be able to invest in many of the public relations activities. Determine the approach appropriate for you, in your community, with your goals and targeted audiences.

2.4 Assessing Outcomes from Public Relations and Marketing

You will never be thoroughly informed about audience interests or concerns. The information you want to obtain from these marketing and public relations activities are presented in **Exhibit 2-4**.

Exhibit 2-4 What You Should Learn from Public Relations and Marketing

- What level of response did your efforts receive?
- Is there enough interest to merit continuing?
- How useful was the response? Who is just looking and who is really interested?
- In what areas are you finding the most interest? Are certain industrial sectors more interested than others; or are specific WPL issues receiving more positive reaction than others?
- How do your findings match up with your initial goals?
- Did your public relations and marketing achieve your goals?

An honest assessment of your initial marketing and public relations activities should serve as the foundation to refine your WPL efforts. The purpose of these activities is to get your message out, and assess the responses you receive from your efforts. This serves to formulate the direction of your WPL effort.

2.5 Chapter Summary

Based on the information you gained from your marketing and public relations activities, now is the time to revisit your marketing and public relations strategies.[4]

Three outcomes are intended from the activities described in this chapter. **[1]** Heightened awareness in the community regarding the need for WPL services, **[2]** improved information about the type of program you could successfully deliver, and **[3]** information about specific entities who might be interested in a WPL partnership with you

As with **Chapter 1**, the information gained through this chapter should be used to further refine your thinking on the types of WPL services your organization can offer.

[4] Note that you should not evaluate after 1 or 2 weeks. Generally, public relations activities have to be repeated regularly at least 3 times before sufficient name or message recognition will be achieved.

Questions and Answers

Q.: My organization's resources are limited. Does this automatically mean I shouldn't do a WPL program? How much marketing do I really have to do?

A.: No, the fact that your resources are limited doesn't mean you shouldn't undertake a WPL program or cooperate in providing one. Your marketing strategy should be tailored to your resources and community. You should have a marketing strategy even if you're only printing a brochure. You'll need a means to obtain feedback on the effectiveness of your strategy.

Q.: I already have a request for a WPL program. Do I have to go through all of this?

A.: At least partially. You should develop materials that describe your capabilities for the potential clients, using the elements of the marketing plan presented. You should have a way to obtain feedback on the effectiveness of your marketing; and refine your action strategy. Just because you have initial interest doesn't mean you're going to be the provider.

Case Study: Marketing and Public Relations

Joe Lozano is now the Program Coordinator for the WPL initiative. He turns his attention to marketing and public relations.

Internal Marketing

Joe's first step is to talk with his program staff about the new initiative. He is excited about the prospects and wants to communicate his excitement to the staff. But the first meeting is not an easy one. The three ESL instructors correctly recognize that if the initiative succeeds, they will have still more responsibilities but possibly no salary increase. Joe's secretary (who is currently responsible for preparing the course catalogue and all progress reports) suspects her life will also be more hectic. Joe's staff predictably asks, "What's in it for us?"

As opposition to the new initiative mounts in the staff meeting, Joe points out that the current PIC contract is in danger of being terminated since there is now a greater emphasis on technical training and less emphasis on adult basic education, despite the national trend to target services to the hard-to-serve. Joe tries to fire up his staff with a little reflection on the need to seize new opportunities.

In the end, Joe and his staff agree, at least, that the new initiative must be approached with an open mind. He assures them he will be sensitive to the need for adequate resources to start a new program effort. Joe also reminds the instructional staff that WPL is relatively new and may be useful for them to be "on the cutting edge." In a more practical vein, he asks them to look over the materials he has assembled on WPL and resolves to call his community college contact as well as CDE to ask if any training sessions are offered. He also sends an E-mail query on OTAN to see if there are any current WPL staff development materials.

External Marketing

After the staff meeting, Joe turns to the question of what to do to build an initiative to meet the WPL needs of the local construction industry. His first step is to contact one of the construction industry leaders he had talked with before to arrange a presentation at the local association meeting. Joe begins preparing his remarks to the association and putting together a two-page handout about the initiative.

In preparing Joe knows to "keep it simple." He decides the handout should focus on the main features of "How a Workplace Learning Program Operates" and "Types of Needs addressed through WPL Programs" from Exhibit 2-1 of the ***Provider's Manual***. This will allow him to focus the types of outcomes to expect,

costs and benefits of WPL efforts, and implementation issues. Each of these issues will benefit from some give and take. A logo for the initiative, a contact person and phone number are put on the handout.

Presentation

Joe talks about the district's commitment to community partnerships, about the *Learning Unlimited* track record in meeting new kinds of adult learning challenges through its JTPA and GAIN classes. He talks also of their experience in working with learners with little schooling and limited English, reminding employers that they themselves know how highly motivated the immigrant workforce is to learn new skills. Joe's presentation lasts 15 minutes.

The groups' questions indicate that the new, large-scale developments require a great deal of effort in meeting new ordinances relating to environmental impact and community beautification. Several contractors are having serious problems because their most experienced workers aren't prepared to configure and install new irrigation and drainage systems. The documentation is in English, each component must be tested to be sure it works, and trouble-shooting is occupying an increasing amount of supervisors' time. They need help in this area. Joe says his organization can help and that they should talk further.

As the meeting ends, Joe has three interested prospects. The largest is very enthusiastic, and the two smaller firms are interested but uncertain about cost and the ultimate pay off for them. The larger firm is not so concerned about cost but worries that a WPL program may be a logistical nightmare. They have four projects at different stages of completion and don't know if they can really spare any one to coordinate. Joe, who has a great deal of experience in this kind of interaction, makes arrangements to meet with each of the interested firms while assuring them that he thinks that it will be possible to work out solutions to their problems.

Internal Marketing Revisited

At the next staff meeting, Joe tells his staff of the interest of the construction industry. Particularly the landscape contractors. Several instructors feel that the district has enough to do with adult learners already enrolled. They shouldn't even be in the business of providing services to private sector employers if they can't service all of the adults who want basic education. Joe says he understands the concerns. He goes on to give more precise background on the effects of an unprepared workforce. He is careful to point out that it isn't *just* a business problem. It has far reaching effects. Further, bringing education to the workplace is practical and desirable for a functional context approach. The real issue is how best to meet the educational needs of workers. The staff agree that Joe has a point.

As the meeting wraps up, Joe asks the staff to review the materials available and think about how they could best contribute to the initiative.

Joe also prepares a memo for the Director's signature, to be sent to key district staff about the WPL initiative.

External Marketing Revisited

Joe is pleased with the initial response from the landscaping contractors but his marketing strategy was to address the entire construction industry. He prepares a press release on their WPL initiative, which he sends to the local newspaper, the local radio station, and the local TV station. The press release is run in the local business section, and he is invited to be a guest on the weekly call-in show–on the local radio station.

Joe's community college contact calls and talks fairly pointedly about their earlier discussion of collaborative partnerships. Joe says he's been pursuing the initiative but that this doesn't mean there's no opportunity for collaboration. Joe ends by agreeing to keep in touch.

Chapter 3

Meeting with Employers

At this point you are about to enter discussions about offering a workplace learning (**WPL**) program. In your first meetings you'll be building the foundation for employers to understand what services you can provide. You also will be conveying how they can and must play an active role in WPL. This chapter leads you through three steps:

3.1 Understanding the Provider-Client Relationship

3.2 Building a Good Provider-Client Relationship

3.3 Negotiating a Needs Analysis Agreement

At the end of this chapter you should be ready to initiate a contract to assess or verify the literacy needs in the workplace. The Literacy Needs Analysis (**LNA**) is discussed in **Chapter 4**.

3.1 Understanding the Provider-Client Relationship

A WPL contract brings the provider and an employer together to plan, implement, and evaluate a program. Each bears the responsibility of assuring that the program developed meets the organization's needs, and is not just a quick fix directed to superficial objectives. This section covers three topics basic to building a collaborative WPL program:

(1) Understanding What Educators and Employers Offer Each Other

(2) Explaining What Providers Need

(3) Exploring What Clients Need

Each topic is discussed below.

(1) Understanding What Educators and Employers Offer Each Other

The employer's ongoing involvement is crucial for a successful program. The provider offers the ability to appropriately customize programs to the needs of the workplace and refine instructional approaches. Customization of program design to workplace and workers' needs is important to the success of the program. This process requires expertise with instruction, adult learning, skill within subject areas, and experience

identifying specific workplace needs. It requires program development expertise on the part of providers. This includes the ability to target skills to be taught, set priorities among skills, and design an approach for teaching the skills. Providers also lead the fine-tuning of instructional approaches to enhance participants' outcomes.

Educators need employers as well. Expertise involves more than subject-specific knowledge, it requires knowledge of workplace needs and feedback about how well the instructional approach is meeting these needs. Providers need employers to work with them in making this expertise available. Business involvement allows providers to target the appropriate skills, set up a learning environment to encourage employees to gain the necessary skills through participation, and refine the program to improve outcomes. Implementation issues always arise with WPL programs. The employer should be a full team member to assure these issues are handled appropriately and needed contract revisions are made.

The elements of a successful relationship for WPL are similar to those for a successful joint venture of any sort. They include:

- **Clear understandings concerning shared expectations, roles and responsibilities.** Program expectations include the level of funding provided for the program by each party, learner recruitment, learning site arrangements and requirements, schedule of implementation, level of staff effort and qualifications, types of outcomes and means of verifying outcomes.

- **Measurable objectives and clear implementation standards.** These are critical for documenting performance and estimating cost-effectiveness of the program. Without objectives and standards, problems in achieving results cannot be identified, and solutions cannot be devised.

- **Joint problem identification and negotiation of solutions.** Problem solving is crucial to assure the program is effective and to reduce barriers to program success. These go hand-in-hand with continuous program improvement. A joint commitment to identify and solve problems is part of an agreement.

- **Mutually identified outcome standards.** In the terms of the WPL program, this means agreement on the level of skill attainment necessary, the expected competencies as a result of attained skills and what these competencies will look like on the job.

The early establishment of a joint planning and program implementation process is vital for success. It is the primary means for negotiation of a Literacy Needs Analysis (**LNA**).

(2) Explaining What Providers Need

In general the provider is looking for a supportive environment to offer a high quality and effective WPL program. This entails a client who will agree to (not necessarily in order of importance):

- Adequately fund program planning, implementation and evaluation

- ❑ Facilitate access to company staff and job-related materials
- ❑ Provide an individual company liaison for the program
- ❑ Recruit program participants following agreed upon procedures or work with the provider in doing so
- ❑ Inform the provider in advance of conditions that affect the class
- ❑ Work with the provider to address implementation issues
- ❑ Support the program and participants in it at all management levels
- ❑ Appreciate participants' involvement in the program and make use of the skills they enhanced or acquired
- ❑ Recognize a successful program and be willing to publicize it
- ❑ Assure adequate instructional time and an appropriate schedule
- ❑ Assure appropriate meeting space, utilities and equipment
- ❑ Provide space to store program materials
- ❑ Provide access to copying for instructional purposes
- ❑ Provide access to emergency telephone

Not making clear arrangements in these areas opens the door to conflicting expectations, and these conflicts can cause you to absorb unexpected costs or make last minute program adjustments.

Employers are likely to be concerned with their ability to cover the costs of a program, the viability of it, the problems posed by it, and the benefits to their organization. You will need to discuss these issues openly and candidly. The following issues will be of concern:

- ❑ How much does the employer really need the program?
- ❑ Are the identified skills truly causing workplace problems?
- ❑ Will the investment make a significant impact on the problem?
- ❑ How can employees participate and still get their work done?
- ❑ Are the likely implementation problems and the cost manageable?
- ❑ Can you deliver the instructional program and the learning outcomes the employer needs?

These are discussed further in the next section, in the context of what an employer is looking for in a program provider.

(3) Exploring What Clients Need

An employer (or other funding entity) is a stakeholder not only because of funding, but also because the program will involve changes in the workplace.[1] The objectives of a client go beyond the program to your ability to collaborate in creating a learning environment in the workplace. Clients are likely to look for a provider who will:

- ❑ Truly customize a WPL program and understand the nature of their business

[1] Both businesses (public and private) and unions have funded WPL programs. While the specific concerns of each entity may differ, there is similarity as well. Because of this similarity, they are discussed together in this section.

- ❑ Teach skills that enable workers to perform tasks better—concerning quantity, quality, and morale; working faster, fewer errors, meeting performance criteria, effective problem-solving
- ❑ Provide a basic educational foundation for further skills training
- ❑ Provide competent and efficient instructors oriented to workplace needs, trained in the curriculum and equipment necessary, and able to facilitate application of skills
- ❑ Provide for continuity of instruction
- ❑ Gather all the materials required for the program
- ❑ Provide a liaison with the workplace
- ❑ Assist in recruiting program participants
- ❑ Implement a program which is minimally intrusive, has anticipated as many problems as possible before full-scale initiation, has the ability to change as needed
- ❑ Conform to company culture, work schedule, and work flow
- ❑ Implement an efficient program which minimizes the overall cost of the program and maximizes the benefits
- ❑ Monitor and evaluate program effectiveness in meaningful terms, and make adjustments as necessary to achieve goals
- ❑ Collaborate in identifying and solving problems that arise in the course of program implementation
- ❑ Notify them of problems that arise with the program, outcomes from it, and any publicity about it
- ❑ Respect workplace and worker confidentiality
- ❑ Consider regulatory compliance issues (*e.g.* American Disabilities Act requirements, Equal Employment Opportunity Commission guidelines)

Providers should be aware of what is meant, specifically, when such issues are raised, and the staffing demands, costs and administrative arrangements needed to address them. Ultimately, employers will base their decisions on what they will get from the program that will make the expense and the trouble worthwhile. The provider and client should determine criteria for success. This requires articulating the outcomes from the program. These should be part of the agreement.

The next section identifies the steps for building a solid provider-client relationship.

3.2 Building a Good Provider-Client Relationship

There are three steps to building a relationship between a provider and a client:

(1) Preparation for Talking with Potential Clients

(2) Presentation to Potential Clients

(3) Developing a Planning Team

These are discussed below.

(1) Preparation for Talking with Potential Clients

Whether someone called you or you contacted them, before talking with potential clients you should be taking the following steps to avoid wasted time and effort.

❑ **Gather Background Information.** You must do some background research on the firm (**Checklist 3-1**). Information may come from the Quick WPL Needs Scan, marketing activities, conversations with company staff, and from the library, business journals, or other sources.

Checklist 3-1 Preparation Before Contacting or Presenting to Potential Client

- ☐ **Profile client organization:** Products or services, size and scope of business, organizational style, characteristic organization—types of departments, positions; do they have in-house training; if so, what kinds of training do they have?
- ☐ **Analyze client organizational structure**: Levels of management, governing board, union representation, employees–what is the profile of employees to be trained?
- ☐ **Know your audience**: The person making the ultimate decision, who has to approve the program; how is the training funded and who is involved in the funding decision?
- ☐ **Identify business or industry trends:** Technological change, change in process of doing business, change in competition level; what training needs have been addressed and which are likely to arise with industry trends?
- ☐ **Describe the nature of the problem:** Do they know what the problem is? Is it seen as employee absenteeism or turnover or is it more explicitly tied to productivity or ability to adapt to demands from new technology? Did they assess the problem themselves or is it management judgment? How sure are they about their definition of the problem? Why?
- ☐ **Identify what you can provide and your qualifications:** Documentation of your general staff qualifications, ability to deliver similar programs, and history relevant to this company.

❑ **Identify a Client Contact Person.** It's difficult to know the exact title of the contact. Some titles are: personnel director, vice-president of human resource development, training manager, operations manager, plant manager, chief executive officer, a union representative or an employee. If your contact is *not* a decision maker, you will need to find out how decisions are made, who makes them, and how to get to these people.[2]

❑ **Prepare Presentation.** All your presentations should be structured to serve four functions: **[1]** listen to the client (their perception of

[2] It is assumed that meetings will be held at the site of the potential client. This is a stressed in most marketing manuals, as well as the necessity to return calls from potential clients as quickly as possible.

program need and concerns), **[2]** educate the client about your perspectives on WPL, **[3]** inform the client how your organization will satisfy their needs, and **[4]** outline the components of your approach.[3]

Several presentations may be necessary for other departments. When possible, two people should make the presentation. Having an extra person from your organization can help assure you don't miss feedback and that issues are addressed systematically.

Checklist 3-2 outlines the issues to be included in any of the initial presentations. An interview checklist for meeting with potential clients is presented in **Appendix D-1**.

Checklist 3-2 Outline of Issues to Address in the Initial Presentations

- ☐ What is the nature of the problem to be addressed? How was it discovered? How do perceptions about it differ?
- ☐ How you can provide a program that meets the employer's needs. What are the benefits from the program you offer?
- ☐ How should the WPL program operate?
- ☐ What steps are entailed in implementing the program (for them and for you)?
- ☐ What are the areas of concerns about program cost and implementation? What options exist for easing problems?
- ☐ How can the skills acquired during the program be supported? What is involved in assuring the skills acquired transfer to new situations?

❑ **Presentation Materials.** You should bring materials to distribute. These include a description of your organization, the types of programs offered, quality of staff, instructional approaches used, types of outcomes, and clients' responses to outcomes. You should include specific information on WPL programs you have been involved with.

(2) Presentation to Potential Clients

The key to a successful program will be your ability to work openly and thoughtfully with the employer to deliver a responsive program. Your presentation should include:

❑ Need for a WPL program at the company (and indicators of it)

❑ Anticipated results of your program (how they solve the firm's problems)

❑ Answers to corporate concerns (how will the program address needs: control, cost-effectiveness, and efficiency)

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[3] Of course the nature of the presentation will differ depending upon the organization you are addressing, both the nature and size of the audience, what you have included in your previous presentations to them, and how much previous attention they have devoted to identifying WPL needs.

- Likely cost of the program (overall, per individual, given outcomes for the company with options and consequences of lowering it)
- How results are turned into long-term gains (different strategies for implementing a WPL program here)
- Your qualifications for carrying out a cost-efficient program
- What has to be done before a program can be started

You should leave presentations with information about the clients' concerns, a perception of their needs, and what to do next. You should listen, ask questions and check your conclusions (**Exhibit 3-1**).

Exhibit 3-1 Information to Gather from your Presentations

Company Style: language, culture and structure

Perspective: toward training, workplace literacy; and how WPL fits into other training they offer

Concerns: about offering and participating in WPL programs

Program Issues: employee profile, needs being addressed, expected workplace change/trends and how they affect program needs

Decision Making Process: what they need to know to make the decision to hire you, likely level of participation and funding

How They Perceive You: strengths or weaknesses, competitors being considered and criteria for comparison

How You Perceive Them: factors that indicate suitability as a client, such as crisis management style, collaborative style, commitment to addressing the problem

Motivation: reasons why the client is requesting WPL program at this time and clients' level of readiness to offer a program

To get the negotiations started, the first and very important step is establishing a Planning Team. This is discussed in the next section.

(3) Developing a Planning Team

The Planning Team[4] plays a crucial role for you in two ways. First it offers a source of information about the workplace. This is necessary to formulate an effective approach to the workplace as well as to anticipate implementation issues. Second it offers a forum for obtaining program "buy-in" from all who are involved.

- **Purpose and Activities of the Team.** The purpose of the Team is to assist with planning, implementing,, and evaluating the WPL program. It may require building collaboration among departments within the client's organization. In this Literacy Needs Analysis (**LNA**) phase there are seven objectives for the Team:

[4] Sometimes the Planning Team may have as few as two people. Other times, it may be as large as 15. The size of the team depends on the scope of the project, the resources and interests of the organizations involved.

- Set priorities and focus for analyzing workplace needs
- Inform provider staff about workplace trends that affect LNA
- Market the LNA to key groups within the company
- Assist in identifying and resolving implementation issues
- Assist in identifying and resolving ethical and legal issues
- Review findings and recommend need for a WPL program
- Begin to involve employees in the WPL program

The Team products are a useful and smoothly implemented LNA and a recommendation to the company about the need for a WPL program. If a need has been established, the role of the Team expands to include monitoring the development of the customized program, providing feedback, monitoring implementation, and program evaluation. **Appendix D-2** has a list of responsibilities to be considered in contracting a WPL program.

❑ **Identifying Team Members.** The composition of the Team reflects the client organization. The Team should include representatives of different management levels and affected departments.[5] Client representatives should be knowledgeable about contractual responsibilities to employees, types of accidents, safety regulations, specific problem areas, job requirements and duties. They should include:

- Management: upper-level and mid-level managers
- Supervisors
- Employees: potential participants and non-participants
- Union or employee representatives
- In-house trainers or personnel department

The provider should be represented by the instructional staff, the program manager and any other relevant program stakeholder. Liaison staff should be knowledgeable about adult learning needs and instructional strategies, employment training concerns and support needs, successful WPL practices, and provider capabilities.

To actually identify and select staff for participation, the following should be agreed upon: **[1]** optimal size of the Team, **[2]** criteria and process for selection of participants and **[3]** responsibilities of each person and time commitment entailed.

Potential participants should be contacted and informed why their participation is necessary and what expertise they will contribute. Identified candidates then should be reviewed by company representatives, and selection made.

Both an external and in-house Team coordinator are needed. The *external* coordinator is the director of the WPL in the service provider. The *in-house* Team coordinator should be selected by the

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[5] Some of these staff categories may not be appropriate for your program. In organizational contexts where they do exist, however, they should be represented.

potential client (employer, union, or other entity). The function of the role is to facilitate Team process and communication.

- **Steps in Initiating a Planning Team:** The Team is the vehicle for identification of the problems to be addressed for the short- and long-term health of the firm. Decisions set the tone for the learning environment. Once a Team is formed, and an internal coordinator selected, the coordinator should:

  - Clarify goals, activities, and expectations of the Team
  - Arrange regular meetings and agendas
  - Record decisions made at meetings
  - Assign responsibility for carrying out decisions
  - Make information available in timely manner
  - Assure feedback from constituencies is heard

  Establishing a Team mission, regular meeting times, agendas, and ensuring that workplace interests get appropriate hearing are essential.[6] See **Appendix D-3** for a sample agenda.

3.3 Negotiating a Literacy Needs Analysis Plan

A Literacy Needs Analysis (**LNA**) is an examination of skills required to perform the jobs in the workplace. It has three components. The first focuses on literacy skills inherent in tasks which are part of the job. The second focuses on workers' current proficiency in the identified skills. The third involves drawing conclusions about needed proficiency in skills workers require to adequately perform a task.

Formally agreeing to do a workplace LNA is the first activity of the contract.[7] This section discusses:

(1) Developing a Literacy Needs Analysis Plan

(2) Negotiating the Literacy Needs Analysis Contract

Whether or not employers have previously identified the problem and know what they want, you need to understand what the workplace needs are.

(1) Developing a Literacy Needs Analysis Plan

The LNA Plan is the first product of the Team. Central elements are listed in **Exhibit 3-2**.

[6] Even in a very small team, these issues should be discussed overtly.

[7] This also is called a literacy audit. We use the more inclusive term of literacy needs analysis (LNA) to underline the use of quantitative and qualitative data about task performance in determining need for a WPL program.

Exhibit 3-2 Central Elements of a Workplace LNA Plan

Level of the LNA: Level of description needed to accurately identify or verify the problem

Scope of the LNA: Which job categories, tasks, and departments should be assessed

Methods for the LNA: Workplace observations interviews, review of written job tools, reference materials, written job products, observation of oral communication requirements, individual worker assessment

Procedures for the LNA: How to obtain materials, extent of observation necessary, numbers of workers to interview

Cost Implications: Burden and cost for the client

Specific Responsibilities: Is the provider or the employer required to: inform supervisors and employees about the LNA, assure participation, select employees to be observed or tested, provide and schedule space for employee testing, inform others about problems, obtain materials to be examined, analyze the findings, report findings, determine significance of the findings

Expected Utility: How findings will be useful, who can use findings, how results will be reported, and how legal or privacy issues will be treated

Identification of Sensitive Issues: How they will be handled (*e.g.* need for English proficiency to accomplish a task, confidentiality of findings, worker complaints)

If a potential client has conducted some type of needs analysis you may be able to economize and streamline your LNA process. However, you must understand the findings from the clients' needs analysis and determine the validity of their approach. The LNA will serve as the premise for your overall WPL program. It is *imperative* that the information gained from the LNA be accurate.[8]

(2) Negotiating the Literacy Needs Analysis Contract

The provider's representative should have the authority to negotiate the contract and quickly obtain approval of the contract from the provider institution. To do this the provider representative has to understand the criteria for approval from the organization. Specifics are discussed below.

- ❑ **Budgeting.** While budgets will differ based on the plan, some common elements can be identified (**Checklist 3-3**).

[8] The range of possible components of a needs analysis are described in detail in Chapter 4 and techniques provided for handling them.

Checklist 3-3 Provisional Budget for a Needs Analysis Plan

Provider Costs:

- ☐ **Personnel**–Technical and support staff include time for: planning, scheduling, implementing, documenting, analyzing, meetings and revising report. $_____
- ☐ **Outside Consultants** (if necessary). $_____
- ☐ **Printing and Copying**–Preparation, implementation, reporting including development of instrumentation, final instrumentation, documentation, analysis and reporting initial and final findings. $_____
- ☐ **Supplies and Equipment**–Preparation, implementation, reporting including video/audio tapes, films, slides, transparencies, computer time, equipment, and mailing expenses. $_____
- ☐ **Telephone**–Preparation, implementation, reporting $_____
- ☐ **Travel**–Implementation and reporting including meals and travel at different client organization sites or across shifts. $_____
- ☐ **Administration and Overhead** $_____
- ☐ **Miscellaneous** $_____

Costs of Needs Analysis for the Provider $_____

Client Costs:

- ☐ **Personnel**–Team rep., supervisor and other staff including time lost from their regular job, LNA planning, scheduling, providing data, being interviewed or observed, analyzing findings. $_____
- ☐ **Printing and Copying**–Preparation, implementation, reporting including copying from development of instrumentation, training materials, final instrumentation, documentation, analysis and reporting. $_____
- ☐ **Facilities and Equipment**—Implementation including any cost from temporary use of facilities and equipment for testing of employee competencies. $_____
- ☐ **Miscellaneous** $_____

Costs of Needs Analysis for the Client $_____

The provider should always stress the benefits and outcomes that the client will receive from the program:[9]

- Information on job performance, quality across levels within the organization, productivity issues that might be improved.
- Information related to work skills–promotion, absenteeism, accident rates, performance appraisals, turnover, grievances.

[9] Specific procedures for completing a workplace LNA are presented in **Chapter 4**. That chapter will provide much of the information needed to complete this budget worksheet outline.

- Management concern with skills needed for task performance –morale, communication, definition of outcomes, barriers to performance, motivation to improve performance.

A poorly budgeted project will drain resources from other programs and undermine the quality of the outcomes. Effective budgeting treads the thin line of requiring that perceived benefits from the LNA are clearly identified while assuring that tasks needed to make the findings reliable and valid are identified and budgeted.

- **Critical Tasks.** The tasks entailed in planning, implementing and reporting the findings of a LNA include developing the instrumentation, implementing the LNA, analyzing, and reporting the findings. Some of these tasks might be contracted out, or shortened by adapting instruments used in other settings. A decision to take a shortcut shouldn't undercut the outcomes of the tasks.

  The dilemma posed in conducting a LNA themselves is that providers may not have the requisite skills and expertise required to conduct a good LNA. Others may not have staff available to do it.

  The improved quality and efficiency from specialized LNA contractors is often lost in translating their results for your use. The consequence of this is that providers have to make the investments necessary to build in-house staff skills. This means, at the very least, designation of a staff person with responsibility for both the LNA and curriculum design and providing for concentration of an adequate level of effort and training to accomplish these tasks. This may entail contracting with expert consultants to work with in-house staff through several projects or subsidizing staff to attend available training offerings on this topic.

  The primary way to cut LNA costs is to restrict the focus to tasks critical to effective job performance; subtasks critical to successfully completing the task and indicating a range of literacy skills; a subset of employees doing the tasks (one department or shift). Methods used should aim to encourage employees to participate in a literacy enhancement program if one is established.

- **Negotiating Techniques.** Successful negotiation of contracts requires trust and the following elements:[10]

  - Exchange perceptions of issues and clarify differences by defining issues and addressing them one-by-one
  - Understand others' concerns, not just their position on an issue
  - Generate mutual understanding of tasks, outcomes and consequences
  - Identify objective criteria to evaluate the success of the project
  - Select a solution that poses a win:win outcome

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[10] For more on negotiation see Phillip L. Hunsaker & Anthony J. Alessandra, ***The Art of Managing People***, New York: Simon and Schuster, 1980; Roger Fisher and William Ury, ***Getting to Yes***, New York: Penguin Books, 1981; Chester L Karras, ***Give and Take; The Complete Guide to Negotiating Strategies and Tactics***, New York: Thomas J. Crowell Co., 1974.

Know your costs and your "break even" figure under different scenarios. The negotiating agreement should reflect a "win" for all stakeholders. **Exhibit 3-3** presents agreement components.

Exhibit 3-3 Components of a LNA Agreement

Technical Description:

- Description of the project, its goals and objectives
- Description of approach toward project
- Description of activities for accomplishing the project
- Delineation of tasks and subtasks
- List of project and task outcomes
- Description of how each task will be evaluated

Partners' Capabilities and Responsibilities:

- Description of what each party brings to the agreement
- Description of project management and troubleshooting process
- Identification of partners' responsibilities for each task
- Estimate of time and burden entailed in each
- Description of capabilities for carrying out tasks
- Identification of personnel who will work on each task
- Project and task products and schedule for product delivery

Budgetary Discussion:

- Budget adequate for completing project, and rationale
- Payment schedule
- Timetable for completing the project
- Description of any special arrangements, such as use of space or equipment, use of outcomes, confidentiality of materials
- Cancellation clause, should the project not be done in a manner befitting the evaluation criteria[11]
- Hold harmless clause, indemnifying the provider against claims, suits, actions, damages or causes of action arising out the agreement to conduct a workplace LNA

References

To successfully negotiate this agreement, you need to be aware of your organization's and your own bottom line. Knowing your bottom line means you should not revise it in mid-stream. When you deem it is not feasible to undertake the task—either for financial or some other reason—it is in nobody's interest to change your mind; stick with that decision. The final agreement should be signed by both parties.

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[11] Including but not limited to, use of the physical facilities, supervision, administration, and implementation of proper educational content. Such identification should include personal injury, loss of life or damage to property, any orders, judgments, or decrees which may be entered, and against all costs, attorney's fees, expenses, and liabilities incurred in and about the defense of such claim. In the event a suit is brought against both parties, you should be held only to the amount of your issuance of $x.

3.4 Chapter Summary

This chapter takes you through the steps between marketing the program concept and obtaining an agreement to undertake a LNA. These steps entail mechanisms for clarifying goals and objectives, and setting up a process for coming to agreement on studying the dimensions and nature of the problem (LNA). How to design a workplace LNA is discussed in **Chapter 4**.

Questions and Answers

Q: How long is the contracting process likely to take? Can I speed up the process?

A: Some programs start quickly, others take a long while before a decision is made. At some point you have to make a decision about how long is too long. Time is money, and time *not* spent looking for other clients. Remember, you're not generating income while you're negotiating a contract. Several activities may speed up the process. First, clarify as early as possible the decision making steps and persons involved. Be sure the right people are getting the right information. Second, explain the Planning Team in your first meeting with client representatives. Development of a Team is evidence of some commitment on the part of the client and may buffer you from some of the organization's politics.

Q: I have a standard agreement form. Do I have to adapt it to a new site?

A: While client concerns may be similar, the workplaces will be different. It's advisable to start from scratch to be sure that specific issues affecting the design and delivery of a useful LNA are addressed here. Do use what you found in previous programs, but don't assume agreements will automatically work in a new context the same as in the old.

Case Study: Meeting with Employers

Joe prepares for his initial meetings by researching each firm. This way he can anticipate problems and prepare responses. He also begins searching for staff.

The Prospective Clients

Sierra Environments is a large firm with a reputation for aggressive negotiations and a commitment to quality. They are likely to agree to the benefits of a WPL program, but will have questions about the cost. Joe calls the manager and suggests that 1 or 2 crew supervisors be included in the meeting. Joe feels the supervisors may argue that upgrading worker skills is needed, regardless of cost.

Ottinger Landscapes is a small family-owned business. They are supportive of workers but feel most workers won't take initiative and the government keeps handing out benefits. Joe isn't sure what problems he'll face in the meeting but expects it will tax his diplomacy.

Custom Landscapes is medium sized and very well run. The manager has written to the newspaper about the inefficiency of the public sector, so Joe knows he'll face tough questions

about *Learning Unlimited's* ability to guarantee a quality program.

Finding LNA Staff

After reviewing the ***Manual*** sections on staffing issues, and talking with several prospects, Joe chooses Susan Jacobson (from his staff) to assist him in the project. Susan has experience with curriculum development through her development of several adult literacy programs–designed for maximum flexibility. She's worked with the local hotels to inform workers about community ABE and ESL services, and has been an instructor with the district for several years. Besides her experience, Susan is bright, dependable, assertive and interested in new approaches to learning and teaching. Ten hours for the WPL project are added to her 30 hours a week of teaching.

Harris Lewis is a workplace literacy specialist whom Joe Lozano had contacted on the recommendation of the community college. Harris teaches in the Department of Anthropology at the local CSU. Harris has agreed to subcontract with Joe to provide expertise in the LNA. His qualifications include more private sector staff development and training than experience in public instruction, although he's teaching at the local college. He'll spend most of his time working with Susan in conducting the LNA.

Initial Meeting

The results of the initial meetings were somewhat unexpected. Custom Landscapes, despite a careful review of the benefits of a WPL program, decides there's no guarantee that *Learning Unlimited* can do the job. Joe agrees to contact Custom Landscapes after the program has built a track record.

In the meeting with Ottinger Landscapes, Leo Ottinger wants to decrease worker turnover and overcome the quality control problems. Joe, Susan and Ottinger outline several areas–improve workers' written and oral communication, address applied math skills, and respond to workers' needs. Joe suggests that subsequent planning meetings include Ottinger's lead supervisor, and one of the oldest and one of the newest workers (to respond to the day-to-day worker problems).

Sierra Environments was enthusiastic about the prospects of a WPL program. The manager designated the personnel manager as the contact person. After the discussion, the scope of the skills upgrading effort expanded to include reading irrigation installation manuals, skills for better English language communication with the dispatcher, and applied math.

The manager realizes that the LNA is the premise of the eventual program design. He asks if an objective expert shouldn't be hired to do the LNA and then have Joe's staff design and deliver the program. Joe tells him that *Learning Unlimited* has hired an LNA expert and explains the importance of the provider being directly involved in the LNA process. The interviews and observations of tasks are vital to designing an effective program. Others ask if the use of an electronic LNA package would be more efficient in time and cost. Joe says that there are some packages available, however, workers may not have enough skills (or trust) to input the correct information, the packages are not customized to their workplace, and again it cuts down on the one-to-one information that is vital.

The manager makes sure that *Learning Unlimited* understands that all information about the firm and this program must be confidential. Joe assures him that all information will be confidential but clarifies that the district will work with any interested firms in providing WPL programs–this may include some of Sierra Environments' competitors. This is not a problem as long as all information gathered is confidential. This will be part of the contract.

The Planning Team

The Team at Ottinger's is informal. It includes Joe, Susan, Leo Ottinger, the lead supervisor, and a long-time employee (who often complains about "getting used to" the new technology). The Sierra Environments' Team is more formal. It includes the personnel manager, the operations manager, a crew supervisor, a worker, Susan Jacobson, and Harris Lewis.

Susan briefs Harris on what she knows of the operations, culture, and concerns of the two potential clients. She gives him detailed observations. Harris suggests that their first step be to develop a checklist of the kind of information they will collect during the LNA. The point of the LNA will be to fill in details in each topic area they have outlined.

The meeting with Sierra Environments turns out to be long–almost 2 hours–but a tremendous amount of information emerges. Sierra's Operations Manager describes the problems he faces in making sure work crews at each of twelve sites have adequate materials. To maximize efficiency, Sierra uses a CB-based radio network, but the whole "on-line" system has been problematic. The dispatcher

occasionally misunderstands supply requests radioed in by crew supervisors; several other times, the dispatcher has been unable to reach crew supervisors. The group agrees that oral English-language skills are an important part of operations efficiency. The company requires supervisors to inventory materials daily and call in reports (followed up with a written form). Sometimes reports aren't submitted. Other times they are inconsistent. While the original focus of the WPL effort was to be on production laborers, the Team agrees to consider extending the program to crew supervisors.

The crew supervisor agrees that several crews have problems communicating on the radio in English but he says that really the emphasis of any literacy training should be on the core problem–that workers are making serious mistakes in installing automated irrigation systems. Harris asks the supervisor to talk more about the company's use of these systems and what kinds of mistakes they are finding. It becomes clear that equipment installation hasn't been a problem on the smaller jobs, but at the 3 large industrial park development projects. Some key questions are identified (*e.g.*, to what extent are literacy problems, problems in reading and math). These will be explored in the actual LNA.

The personnel manager is concerned that investments in WPL won't pay off if workers leave. Raul Arellano, the worker on the Team, says that most workers want to stay with Sierra but the supervisor-worker conflicts can get out of hand. Susan asks Raul what workers want to get out of a WPL program. Raul emphasizes learning English to get ahead. Harris points out that the WPL program should result in better communication and better understanding of the installation process, both of which should build morale and positively impact workers to stay at the job.

After meeting with Ottinger, Susan and Harris assess where things stand. Susan will conduct the entire LNA at Ottinger's with the assistance of Aurelio Luna, a bilingual teacher at *Learning Unlimited*. For the Sierra LNA, Susan will do the interviews while Harris will do the observations that are a bit more difficult to do objectively. Susan will join Harris for 3 of the observation sessions so he can teach her how to do them. Harris will help Susan compile and analyze the information. The goal is for Susan to be able to conduct further LNAs.

The LNA Plans

The next task is to prepare the Literacy Needs Analysis Plan. The ***Manual*** chapter on the LNA budget is very helpful. Harris, based on the information from the meetings and discussions with Joe and Susan, sketches out (for each plan) the number of days for interviews, and observations, and a 2 week turnaround time for analyzing the data. Joe drafts the level, scope, methods, and procedures of the LNA for each potential client and begins to attach costs.

The Sierra Environments' final LNA Plan is a detailed ten-page document. Given the number of interviews, observations and analysis required, the budget is $7,000. Ottinger's LNA plan is simpler, with fewer levels to interview and observe, fewer overall interviews. It costs out at $4,000.00. Joe, Susan and Harris discuss areas that can be cut if either client presses for cost reductions. They decide that some interviews and observations could be cut, the final report could be streamlined, and two of the Team meetings could be combined if need be. They feel these cuts would still result in a solid LNA. The agree on a bottom line figure for each LNA. They can't go below this line and still gain the data they need for an adequate LNA.

The Sierra Environments' Team discusses the budget at length and finally agrees to the $7,000.00 budget. They require that certain stipulations be in the contract to assure deadlines are met and the information is confidential.

Leo Ottinger balks at $4,000 for the LNA plan. After a long discussion about the purpose and necessity for the LNA, they agree to reduce the number of interviews, combine some the Team meetings, and to have Ottinger copy and distribute all necessary materials. Susan will provide all masters and the date she needs them, and the contract will specify who should receive copies. The final budget is $2,800.

Chapter 4

Conducting a Literacy Needs Analysis

This chapter discusses how to conduct a workplace literacy needs analysis (**LNA**).[1] The fundamental elements of the approach were outlined in **Section 3.3**. Now you have to:

- **4.1** Refine the Approach to the Literacy Needs Analysis
- **4.2** Conduct the Literacy Needs Analysis
- **4.3** Analyze and Report the Findings
- **4.4** Develop the Basis for a WPL Contract

As a result of fulfilling the contract for the LNA, you should have built the foundation for a service contract to deliver the WPL program. Each of the four components is discussed in the following sections.

4.1 Refine the Approach to the Literacy Needs Analysis

Goals and priorities for the LNA should be stated in the contract, along with responsibilities of each party in carrying out the LNA. These goals and priorities will be refined. The role of the Planning Team is crucial in providing you with necessary information for incorporating the organization's culture and priorities into the workplace LNA approach. Refining your approach to the LNA requires review of five activities:

- **(1)** Clarify the Focus of the LNA
- **(2)** Adopt an Approach to LNA
- **(3)** Address Administrative and Ethical Issues
- **(4)** Refine Observation Approach
- **(5)** Refine Interview Approach

[1] **A** Literacy Needs Analysis (**LNA**) is an examination of skills required to perform the jobs in the workplace. It has three components. The first focuses on literacy skills inherent in tasks which are part of the job. The second focuses on workers' current proficiency in the identified skills. The third involves drawing conclusions about needed proficiency in skills that workers require to adequately perform a task.

These activities are discussed in the following sections.

(1) Clarify the Focus of the LNA

The LNA should focus on tasks critical to job performance. These tasks were identified as part of your proposal to conduct the LNA (**Section 3.3** Critical Tasks). Be sure, at this point, that you understand the rationale used for identifying a task as critical as well as the relationship of the task to others in the organization.[2]

(2) Adopt an Approach to LNA

Literacy requirements that warrant assessment should have been discussed in meetings preceding the LNA agreement. There are a variety of definitions of literacy used, emphasizing different skills at differing levels of specificity.[3] A relatively broad spectrum of skills is identified by business leaders and endorsed by the U.S. Departments of Labor, Education and Commerce.[4] They include the skills involved in:

- ❑ Communication–vocabulary, grammar, comprehension, writing, speaking, listening, reading;
- ❑ Computation–whole numbers, fractions, decimals, percents, ratios, direct measurement, computed measurements, interpretation and compilation of graphic representations;
- ❑ Referencing information–using manuals/materials for quick reference, knowing where to look for answers or how to use available information to answer questions;
- ❑ Problem-solving and critical thinking–ability to anticipate and solve problems quickly and effectively;
- ❑ Functioning effectively in the workplace–interests, attitudes, and values expected on the job and required for safety, competency, productivity, and repeat business.

Understanding the literacy requirements for a job, requires examination of: **[1]** the range of skills on the job, **[2]** the skill proficiency levels required, and **[3]** the way skills are applied including the ways they are combined with other skills. Understanding the level of skill performance necessary and its relation with other skills is the focus of examination of workplace literacy needs. It is important (and conceptually challenging) to make sure that the framework for literacy analysis is rich enough to capture the many informal "intuitive" skills that enter into workplace competency.

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[2] One resource which can serve as a starting point for you is the material in the Directory of Occupational Titles. This is a document which describes a range of jobs within occupations, indicating required skill competencies for them. It is not detailed enough for you to rely on, but can be informative for you if you are not familiar with the occupations you are observing. Moreover, it can serve to protect you if your analysis of skills is controversial, as these represent federal guidelines. The D.O.T is available in your library or on-line through a number of computer-based information resources.

[3] The definition of "literacy" in the terms of the National Literacy Act of 1991 is: an individual's ability to read, write, and speak in English, and compute and solve problems at levels of proficiency necessary to function on the job and in society to achieve one's goals and develop one's knowledge and potential. (H.R. 751, Sec. 3. Definition)

[4] ***Building a Quality Workforce***, 1988, a joint publication of the U.S. Departments of Labor, Education and Commerce.

(3) Address Administrative and Ethical Issues

The analyses of literacy skill requirements and workplace needs require that you address administrative and ethical issues affecting the utility of the data you collect. These include seven general issues:

- **Provider staff competencies and experience needed to conduct a LNA:** These include orientation to the workplace,[5] experience in detecting skills embedded in a task, observation and interviewing techniques, and documentation techniques. The of the LNA depends on the quality of the data collected; which depends on the objectivity with which they were collected, the accuracy of their representation of workplace requirements. What is required of staff to effectively implement the LNA include:

  - Knowledge of the company, its products, its tasks, the relation of tasks to each other and the company's goals, views of workplace needs, and concerns about the analysis
  - Ability to develop rapport with employees and supervisors
  - Knowledge entailed in recognizing basic skills within employees' task performance
  - Skills entailed with systematically following interview and observation protocols to get the information needed, and
  - Skills required to document observations and findings in a systematic manner. [6]

  Without these skills, staff will be forced to spend time retrieving or obtaining data that could have been collected earlier or better documented. This is costly to you, your organization, and the employer. Beyond the cost, inadequately prepared staff jeopardize the reliability of the data and credibility of the findings. This can be avoided through training and careful preparation for the LNA.

- **Analysis of English language proficiency and workplace communication:** Because language limitations are easy to see, it is often assumed they are *the* problem; but it may be only one problem, masking other workforce issues. Differences in cultural outlook also affect perception of a task and the relevance or acceptability of procedures in it.[7] It is important that skill proficiency levels be assessed taking into account true workplace and task needs, language and cultural proficiency, and the employee's preferred language, as appropriate.

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[5] This includes orientation to the industry or agency function, organization hierarchy, future directions, initial needs statement, etc.

[6] For an elaboration of these skills see Secretary's Commission on Achieving the Necessary Skills (**SCANS**), July, 1991.

[7] In some instances, English proficiency may not be an issue. With mathematics computation, for example, the requirements are understanding how and why to do a calculation, accuracy, recording of results, and the ability to describe the basis for undertaking a specific computation in a format others understand. Not all of these computation components are affected by language proficiency. Some are, but other skill issues are involved as well.

- **Identification of barriers to learning:** Barriers to learning include individuals' attitudes as well as workplace conditions. For example:

  - Workers' fear of losing their jobs
  - Limited or negative educational experiences, or learning disabilities
  - Fear of technology or change
  - Workplace conflict and/or job stress
  - Cultural barriers to topic areas or workplace procedures
  - Need for child care or transportation

  Barriers have implications for determining the viability of successfully addressing literacy issues and for the design of the program. You should elicit perceptions of learning or program barriers in your interviews and in observations of task performance.

- **Preparing Employees for the LNA Process:** The LNA should be kept as simple as possible and be tied directly to job tasks. It is critical that employees are aware of the reason for their participation, the purpose of the assessment, uses of the results and their confidentiality, and what they get out of participating.

  The Planning Team should publicize the LNA to their constituencies, as appropriate, and be available to respond to concerns. The way in which you introduce the task, the rapport you develop with the participants, the design of the task, the way you score performance and how you share this with participants will determine the level of cooperation you obtain and the validity of the data.

- **Scheduling the Assessment of Worker's Competencies:** It is important to note that both the number of sessions for testing and employees' attitudes toward being tested affect productivity, and these effects can continue beyond the assessment period and influence attitudes toward participation in any program that results. Care should be taken to minimize intrusion, to fit into company culture as much as possible, to hold assessment during less busy periods, and to make sure the environment is friendly. Employee participants should get something out of their participation. At a minimum this might be an explanation of the assessment results.

- **Reliability and validity of the data collected:** It is vital to assure that the literacy issues you are focusing on are critical to achievement of a client's goals. If you have reliable and valid data[8] anyone properly trained should uncover the same literacy problems. A variety of factors contribute to reliability and validity of data. They include:

  - How systematically you follow procedures to collect data

[8] In this context, reliability generally refers to the ability to achieve the same results if you did the study again; validity generally refers to whether the measures you use to determine proficiency levels actually portray this. The discussion of the role of culture and language in the workplace is relevant here.

- Objectivity and training for those procedures
- The level of comfort experienced by employees in candidly sharing perceptions and views with you
- Objectivity and detail in documenting observations and interviews
- Physical arrangements of observation, interview and test which make authentic performance more or less difficult to observe

Each of these issues is part of the task of the person conducting the LNA. This person should assure that procedures are established in advance of data collection that are acceptable to staff and clients and will yield reliable data. Time should be allocated to document findings, and findings should be documented in the same way by all assessment personnel. Finally, areas set aside for assessing literacy competencies of workplace employees should be appropriate (well lighted, private, spacious and clean, etc.).

- **Use of data and confidentiality issues:** Confidentiality is an issue that often arises when conducting LNA's, particularly, whether the client should have access to the scores of individual employees in their organization. This issue has to be addressed within the Planning Team. The ***California's State Plan for Workplace Learning*** recommends that employers have access to scores in aggregate, but not linked to specific individuals. On a few occasions, providers have been concerned about employers' desire for raw data on individual employees' LNA; specifically, concern that the data would be used as a basis for culling workers or determining advancement. In some cases such a use may be in violation of Equal Employment Opportunity Commission guidelines, and leave the employer and your organization liable to suit. Even where legal vulnerability is not at issue, it is neither beneficial to the organization nor to you as a provider to have the LNA used in this way. Providing such scores either by hint or in raw form linked to an individual identifier cannot but influence organization management attitudes toward the employee. Moreover, the mere provision of informal or formal data on individual employee performance casts a pall over the entire WPL movement at the site and can seriously damage a positive learning environment. Typically, provider organizations include use of information as part of the LNA contract and ask employees to sign a release of information form about how their information will be used. Each of these issues is illustrated in **Appendix E-1**.

(4) Refine Observation Approach

Observing task performance is necessary to establish the literacy skills required for doing a job well. In refining your approach, you should develop an observation focus. **Exhibit 4-1** presents a list of elements that can affect job performance.

Exhibit 4-1 Elements Affecting Literacy on the Job

Context of tasks

Work pace, level and extent of supervision, noise, physical space, individual or group work in relation to the level of skill proficiency needed for a task.

Materials, tools, work aids, machines and equipment[9]

Skills required to use them effectively or communicate about them, the types of problems which arise, and how they are solved.

Process and techniques

Usual, preferred and idiosyncratic processes, the communication and other skills involved, and how they are solved.

Outcomes

Types of results expected from job performance and nature of products produced in the course of performing the job, such as charts or records; criteria used to determine performance adequacy, the precision required for adequate performance, where and how value is added and subtracted from job products.

Available assistance and reference materials

The type and extent of assistance available for answering questions or solving problems, types of problems solvable in this manner, form in which request has to be offered to obtain assistance (for example written, oral, with what background information).

The observer is required to examine context, process and product associated with a job. All three influence the need for particular skills and the ways in which employees have to apply them together to attack a task. For example, employees who can hold a product in their hands, sensing texture, temperature, size and shape, have need for expressing specific comparisons and types of ratios that may not be apparent from their recitation of the procedures and products associated with a task. An employee whose evaluation depends on speed of work and who has few resources such as a calculator available requires a different level of proficiency than one who has easy access to tools at the work station.

(5) Refine Interview Approach

Employee interviews, along with observations, are the means for examining the need for specific skills. Determining their content should be done with the Planning Team; this is particularly crucial for identifying which jobs and tasks to focus on, determining the length of the interview, and procedures for arranging for the interviews. **Checklist 4-1** presents a list of issues to be explored in interviews for determining skills needed to perform a job.

[9] Tools are hand held, including screw drivers and pneumatic drills; work aids include forms, reference lists, or manuals; machines and equipment are electronic or mechanical, not hand-held, such as computers, cash registers.

Checklist 4-1 Issues to Determine Critical Skills	
Issues	**Comments**
☐ Description of the job tools	
☐ Reference materials and equipment used	
☐ Job performance environment[a]	
☐ Expected outcomes from task and job performance	
☐ Critical job elements or tasks	
☐ Criteria for judging high quality job and task performance	
☐ Specific problems with performance	
☐ Characteristics of less than adequate task performance.	
☐ Workplace conditions affecting quality of task performance	
☐ Discrepancy between employee and supervisor perceptions of high quality task performance	
☐ Discrepancy between employee and supervisor perceptions of the skills needed.	

[a] Note the number of staff working on a task and job simultaneously, and physical environment of the work

Use the checklist to formulate an interview approach that enables you to translate employee and supervisor descriptions of a job into the skills needed to do the job and the level of skill proficiency required for it. Your analysis should distinguish between skills which are imperative for effective job performance and those that are more peripheral.

While all aspects of job performance are relevant to study, some may have more relevance than others to the changes anticipated by the company or specific problems the company is experiencing. Critical tasks and critical skills focusing the interviews and observations should be discussed with the Planning Team.

4.2 Conduct the Literacy Needs Analysis

Conducting a literacy needs analysis involves five steps:

(1) Develop a Literacy Needs Analysis Workplan

(2) Review Reference and Job-Related Materials

(3) Interview Management, Supervisors and Employees

(4) Observe Task Performance

(5) Determine if Workers Have Needed Competencies

Each of these steps is discussed in the following sections.

(1) Develop a Literacy Needs Analysis Workplan

A workplan should give you and your client an idea of where you are, where you want to go and how you intend to get there. The more detailed the workplan, the more accurate your timetable and your budget. This does not mean that every minute detail must be addressed. It also does not mean that you can never sway from the plan. Flexibility should be built in to the timelines. A LNA workplan consists of a checklist of activities, a realistic timetable, and a schedule for implementing the actual LNA. The Planning Team should discuss and contribute to the development of a workplan. It is wise for you to bring a draft workplan to the meeting as a starting point of discussion. **Checklist 4-2** is a sample of a workplan checklist:

(2) Review Reference and Job-Related Materials

All the materials written about a job and job performance criteria should be reviewed with regard to the nature of skills and level of proficiency needed to do the job to meet outcome criteria. Some of the materials to ask for are:

- ❑ Job descriptions
- ❑ Organization's marketing or promotional materials, including newsletters
- ❑ Employee performance appraisals, evaluation criteria, and applied performance measures for skill-based payment systems
- ❑ Reference manuals, job aids, process descriptions.
- ❑ Work materials such as forms for messages, receipts, bills of lading, requisition slips, quality control report forms, manufacturing process report forms
- ❑ Job products, such as completed data records (*e.g.* hours, inventory, or scrap), memoranda, or reports (*e.g.* accident or exception reports)
- ❑ Employee turnover, absenteeism, tardiness or grievance reports

Checklist 4-2 A LNA Workplan Checklist

	Date	Task Duration	Staff Responsible
Finalize scope (which workers, which tasks)			
Set goals and priorities including critical tasks to focus LNA			
Collect all relevant job descriptions, tools, and reference materials			
Publicize the purpose of LNA in the company and gain support for participation			
Formulate an appropriate and realistic action plan for implementing LNA			
Review all analysis procedures to assure that the client's needs and legal responsibilities are respected			
Anticipate and identify problems as they arise in implementing the analysis			
Review findings from the LNA and their interpretation			
Make recommendations based on the findings concerning need for a WPL program			
Review the report of LNA before presentation to management			

It is important to determine the reading level, the vocabulary and writing style of materials used on the job.[10] You also will need to understand the function the materials are designed to serve. For example, are the materials emergency procedures for ingestion of toxic chemicals, or are they procedures for weighing nontoxic materials? The purpose of the materials can make a difference in instruction.

(3) Interview Management, Supervisors, and Employees

A key issue in managing the cost of the analysis relates to whether face-to-face interviews are conducted or the decision is made to collect data by questionnaire. If face-to-face interviews are conducted, additional cost factors relate to how many interviews are done and how long the interview is. Interview guidelines are presented with **Checklist 4-3**. It is noteworthy that some programs have utilized computer software which allow employees and supervisors to enter their answers to a series of questions about their jobs via computer. The advantages to the

[10] There are commercially available procedures to assist you with calculating and indicating reading level of materials.

computer-based approach is reduced cost and privacy of response. Disadvantages are that it does not begin the necessary rapport between the LNA analyst and the employees and supervisors, and it reduces the information gained to the employees' understanding of the questions asked. Moreover, to use this, employees have to be computer literate.

Checklist 4-3 Interview Guidelines to Establish Literacy Requirements

Before Conducting Interviews Have You:

- ☐ Reviewed job descriptions–for the position under analysis, the next level below it, and the position above it
- ☐ Reviewed job functions–for the position under analysis, the next level below it, and the position above it
- ☐ Reviewed previous training materials–for the position under analysis, the next level below it, and the position above it
- ☐ Reviewed performance standards–for the position under analysis, the next level below it, and the position above it
- ☐ Scheduled interviews of selected employees
- ☐ Structured supervisor interviews for 25 minutes or less
- ☐ Structured employee interviews along with observation of that employee[a]
- ☐ Followed Planning Team recommendations

While Conducting Interviews Have You:

- ☐ Interviewed all direct supervisors on targeted job performance
- ☐ Interviewed at least one employee suggested as exemplary in task performance for each supervisor interviewed
- ☐ Interviewed managers—if they manage the department in which the job is performed, or manage an interdependent department (*i.e.*, either provide materials for use in a targeted task or use results from it)

[a] The length of employee observation and interview is affected by the frequency of task performance. Tasks may be done daily, weekly, monthly. If these are key tasks with unique requirements for skills, interview discussion and simulation may substitute for direct observation. This affects the length of time needed for observation and interview. The shortest possible time to obtain reliable and valid information should be designed to reduce disturbance.

A LNA will indicate the number of interviews you need to do. If the contract specifies focus on one group performing one job at one site, and you are verifying work already done, you may interview as few as four or five individuals.[11] This is a minimum number to yield reliable data, enabling reconciliation of differences in perception among those responsible for, those performing, and those handling outcomes from task performance. If, on the other hand, the contract specifies focus on several departments performing different jobs, and you have to go to different sites, you may interview many more individuals. More interviews take time and money, but provide the best data.

[11] For example, the manager, the supervisor, and two or three employees performing the targeted tasks.

(4) Observe Task Performance

How much observation is necessary to form a reliable picture of the workplace depends on how complex the tasks are, how many employees perform them, and the limitations of the contract. **Checklist 4-4** provides some observation guidelines.

Checklist 4-4 Observation Guidelines for Task. Before Observation You Should:

- ☐ Select employees to observe based on supervisors' recommendations.[a] Only a sample of employees performing a job need be observed for the purposes of establishing literacy requirements.
- ☐ Schedule observations after some supervisor interviews are completed.
- ☐ Review job descriptions and job function, previous training materials, and performance standards for:
  - o the position under analysis
  - o the next level below it
  - o the level above it
  - o DOT code descriptions of the task[b]

While Conducting Observations You Should:

- ☐ Observe performance of critical tasks and subtasks.
- ☐ Observe over multiple days, if critical tasks are performed periodically or if performance process (input, procedures, or output) varies.
- ☐ Observe and document
  - o what skills are used,
  - o what proficiency levels are required, and
  - o how skills are applied to the tasks.
- ☐ Consider the:
  - o purpose of tasks performed
  - o relation of these tasks to others in the organization

While Recording and Documenting You Should:

- ☐ Document observations to describe:
  - o the tasks and subtasks, comparing actual job function to written job description data,
  - o the skills and skill levels required, and
  - o any barriers you detect to effective use of skills or special conditions effective skill applications have to take into account.
- ☐ Request copies of materials used during the observation.[c]

[a] All relevant employees should be tested for the purpose of determining whether employees have the needed competencies, in the observation phase, literacy requirements are observed.

[b] Dictionary of Occupational Titles (**DOT**). It contains job descriptions and skill requirements for many jobs. These are revised fairly frequently, and if it contains a description of the tasks you are observing, it may be a valuable asset for designing your observation format. It is available in a library in your area.

[c] Note permission from supervisor may be needed for this.

Each time a worker reads, writes, speaks or does an arithmetic operation it should be recorded, along with the materials used, the setting where

the task is performed, and the metacognitive skills needed to support skill application.

The type of observation in which you follow an employee around is sometimes called job shadowing. While you want to interrupt the worker as little as possible, asking questions about why something was done in a certain way or what criteria are used for judging a task is complete will yield important information. The quality of the information you obtain depends on the relationship you have with the employee and the type of questions you ask. Experts have suggested framing the observation in terms of: "If you had to train someone new to do your job, what would be the first thing (or the hardest thing) you would teach him or her?"[12]

(5) Determine if Workers Have Needed Competencies

The previous activities indicate the requirements for specific literacy skills in the workplace. Next, you must assess the need for building employees' workplace literacy skills. Findings will be used to first decide whether to initiate a WPL program, and second as a basis for designing the program.

Assessment design should be as simple as possible and should address the critical literacy needs identified in the LNA. This means you should:

- ❑ Use an assessment approach that simulates how the tested competency actually is used in the workplace
- ❑ Use job-related language and style in your assessment
- ❑ Compare results of the tests with the write-up of the tasks, to determine where any skill gaps exist.

The format of an assessment task is important. Often a paper and pencil test is administered in a group setting (*e.g.*, a cloze test or more formal, standardized tests). The advantages are that it is simple and relatively inexpensive to administer. A number of employees can take it at the same time, and under the same conditions. Administration is more standardized and predictable. The disadvantages are several. First it may not adequately measure the ability to integrate basic skills into an effective strategy for solving a problem. Second, it may not adequately illustrate the use of metacognitive skills, and barriers to use of these skills. Finally, employees may find paper and pencil tests too dissimilar from their everyday environment to be able to function well, so the findings may not be reliable. Different cultures, languages, and school experiences may affect performance on paper and pencil tests. Paper and pencil tests, if used, should be relevant to the job context and appropriate to the types of tasks employees are asked to perform, as well as to the profile of employees. Standardized tests, if used, should be combined with other measures of skill competency or proficiency.[13]

One alternative to paper-and-pencil tests is a video-based test, or a simulation of task situation—performance based task assessment. The advantage of these tests is that you can directly observe an employee applying skills to solve a task similar to the ones worked on daily. Also,

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[12] Phillippi manual, Section iii, page 115. Note Mikulecky, 1987, also suggests a version of this.

[13] The type of assessment measure should be discussed with and approved by the Planning Team.

they are generally more fun for employees to do and they are less likely to require language proficiency inappropriately (*i.e.*, when, in actual job performance, the employee would not need to use English to perform adequately). With a system for scoring performance reliably, you can gauge an employee's skill proficiencies. The disadvantages of these assessment procedures are that they are more complex to develop and they have to be administered individually. Thus they entail a more expensive assessment process. Care should be taken that the task is relevant to the job; that it embeds the skills relevant to the assessment; that it is relatively fun to do; and that it respects the language and cultural backgrounds of the participants. All such tasks developed should be pre-tested before they are used, to assure that you will be able to use the information they yield. A list of the procedures to implement a LNA are outlined in **Checklist 4-5.**

Checklist 4-5 Checklist for Conducting a Literacy Needs Analysis

Preparation–You Should:

- ☐ Develop or adapt a LNA instrument.
- ☐ Pretest it to assure it reflects appropriate
  - o job-related language and style
  - o context in which these skills generally are applied
  - o level of basic skills necessary to do the targeted job well
  - o issues you wish to assess
  - o consideration of workplace needs for an efficient LNA
- ☐ Train and select staff to conduct the LNA
- ☐ Select an appropriate location, following advice of Planning Team
- ☐ Select employees to assess
- ☐ Inform employees and supervisors about LNA, its purposes, its outcomes, how the data will be used, and to whom it is available
- ☐ Schedule the LNA

Assessment–You Should:

- ☐ Explain and administer the LNA to employees
- ☐ Provide feedback to participants about LNA results
- ☐ Solicit reactions to the assessment situation
- ☐ Act on assessment situation feedback as soon as practicable

Documentation–You Should:

- ☐ Score and document LNA findings to allow generalization about
  - o the proportion of employees in a job category needing identified skills
  - o the workplace tasks which are dependent on identified skills
  - o the extent of skills enhancement needed
  - o implications for the overall need for a WPL program
  - o any irregularities that would invalidate the findings

Another alternative to paper-and-pencil tests, particularly appropriate to the job context and skills assessed are relevant to the job for evaluation of proficiency in communication, is the one-on-one interview. The advantage of these test situations is that you can identify communication problems first hand, you can diffuse test anxiety, and you can better understand the worker's own concerns. Also, writing and reading can be examined separately, if interviews are used as an assessment device. The disadvantages lie in the expense and time entailed with interviews,

and the difficulty of crafting an interview protocol which allows identification of the range of job-related communication problems. Similar to the above methods, care should be taken that the interview designed is relevant .

After completing these steps the data will be ready to analyze and report. This is discussed in the following section.

4.3 Analyze and Report the Findings from the Workplace Literacy Needs Analysis

By comparing the findings from the individual literacy assessment with those from the LNA, implications about the need for a WPL program can be drawn. Findings as well as conclusions should be discussed with the Planning Team. Depending on the results and reaction to them, an outline of customized curriculum, or matrix of skills to be covered in the curriculum, and program participant recruitment plan should be drafted for the client. These constitute a proposal to conduct a WPL program at their site and are discussed further in the next sections. A structure for presenting the findings, and topics that should be addressed in the report, is presented in **Appendix E-2**.

4.4 Develop the Basis for a WPL Contract

The findings of the LNA are the foundation of the WPL program. While completing the LNA you should begin to develop a WPL program contract. This requires a proposal be presented to the potential client. The elements of such a proposal are presented in **Exhibit 4-2**. This proposal forms the basis for negotiation of a service agreement between you as the provider and the client organization.

The program description should use the findings from the LNA. Program priorities should reflect workplace concerns and their implications for a quality WPL program. Key roles and expectations for achieving program goals should be clearly stated; and the training plan must indicate both program scope and estimated cost.

Classes must be long enough so demonstrable outcomes can be achieved, but not so long that participation and attendance diminish. For example, your client may want a program to last 10 weeks. Your assessment of the skills needed, and learner skill level, coupled with the number of class hours indicates that a 16 week program would be most effective. Your recommendation for 16 weeks should be made to the Planning Team. If they are still unable to comply, you need to revise the expected outcomes to meet the 10 week agreement. What you don't want to do is agree to something you feel fairly sure you cannot attain. Beyond informing the client of likely cost, the budget also helps you ensure that delivering a high quality program is within your resources. A budget checklist is provided in **Checklist 4-6**.

Exhibit 4-2 Elements of a Proposal to Conduct a WPL Program

Program Description

Program background, need, scope and focus

Program design, including

- course outline, sample lessons
- delivery methodology, materials and equipment
- final objectives, program strategies and desired outcomes

Anticipated program outcomes and benefits

Program procedures for recruiting participants

Program participation requirements

- hours per week, number of weeks
- instructional location, space

Procedures for ancillary program support

Program participation barriers and incentives

Approach to evaluation

Client-Provider Roles

Designation of roles and responsibilities

- communication channels
- specific responsibilities
- program ownership (what you can do with it once developed)
- mutual guarantees and contingencies

Budget

- Program scope
- Company commitment (dollars and in-kind support)

Program cost should take into account all phases of program development and delivery, and ensure that **[1]** the program has the resources to accomplish its intended objectives, **[2]** both direct and indirect costs are covered, and **[3]** revenue is adequate to support ongoing efforts to improve service delivery capacity.

4.5 Chapter Summary

Based on the activities in this chapter you have now determined whether there is a need for a WPL program at this site and developed a service contract to deliver this program. This chapter provided tools and examples for analyzing workplace literacy needs and assessing workers' competencies from which need for a WPL program is established. It suggested ways to work with the Planning Team on the proposal to initiate a WPL program.

Checklist 4-6 Sample Budget for a WPL Program

Program Design Phase

During this phase you are refining the program concept, developing actual lessons, developing your MIS, hiring instructors, orienting staff to the program design and procedures, making final subcontracting arrangements for program support, coordinating with the Planning Team

- Personnel–Program design person, curriculum design person, evaluation design person, support personnel, program manager[a] $ ____
- Outside consultants–subcontractor costs for meetings[b] $ ____
- Office supplies $ ____
- Printing and copying $ ____
- Supplies and equipment $ ____
- Administration and overhead $ ____
- Travel to the workplace for meetings and planning sessions $ ____
- Telephone $ ____
- Postage $ ____
- Miscellaneous $ ____

Program Preparation Phase

During this phase you are specifically preparing the materials needed to implement the program for day 1 through the duration of the course. Activities include: review of materials, gathering materials, obtaining all equipment–such as tape recorders, computers—purchase of supplies needed for learners

- Personnel costs (meetings to specify and order supplies and understanding how to use them) $ ____
- Learning supplies (pads, notebook, dividers, pens, disks) $ ____
- Instructor supplies (pads, notebook, dividers, pens, disks, records organizer) $ ____
- Office supplies $ ____
- Equipment costs (including films, videotapes, computers, software, slides, or testing materials) $ ____
- Other program relevant materials $ ____
- Printing and copying $ ____
- Telephone $ ____
- Postage $ ____
- Local travel to obtain supplies $ ____
- Miscellaneous $ ____
- Administration and overhead $ ____

Program Delivery

During this phase instructors are offering the classes, the program is being monitored, program staff training and meetings with workplace staff and the Planning Team are held, and support services are made available.

- Personnel costs–instructors, instructional support, program coordinator, program evaluator, program support such as counseling, training volunteers, office support, substitute instructors $ ____
- Volunteer orientation $ ____
- Outside consultants $ ____
- Material costs (consumable, not included above) $ ____
- Facilities costs $ ____
- Equipment costs (if not purchased or included in previous section) $ ____
- Travel to site $ ____
- Telephone, postage $ ____
- Miscellaneous $ ____
- Administration and overhead $ ____

Program Evaluation

These costs are the implementation and write-up of the evaluation. The design costs of the evaluation are included already under program design

- Personnel–site visit time, analysis time, report time, travel to meetings, support personnel $ ____
- Program staff time for meeting with evaluation personnel $ ____
- Printing and copying $ ____
- Office supplies $ ____
- Outside consultants $ ____
- Travel to sites $ ____
- Telephone, postage $ ____
- Miscellaneous $ ____

Report Presentation and Closeout

These costs reflect the work with the Planning Team post program to evaluate the program and use the findings to improve the program and your capacity for delivering a quality program

- Personnel–final program meetings with instructional staff, work with the planning team, meetings with other workplace staff and subcontractors, revising MIS $ ____
- Office supplies $ ____
- Printing and copying, making overheads $ ____
- Telephone $ ____
- Postage $ ____

[a] These may not be different people, but time required for activities under each of these 'hats' has to be accounted for

[b] Although you may subcontract out some activities the cost for them should be included in your budget

Questions and Answers

Q: How can I shorten the LNA process and make it less expensive? The employer is telling me: "I already know what the problem is and who's having it. Why do I have to go through a LNA? What will it tell me that I don't already know?"

A: If an employer has done a LNA, it's important you understand the process used and the results. Moreover, it's critical you understand workplace needs to design a program appropriate to the site. You can do this effectively only if you spend time in the workplace prior to designing the program and talk with supervisors and employees. There are several ways to streamline the process:

- Focus on the most critical of workplace tasks under discussion.
- Limit the number of observations you do, but do enough to gain sufficient information.
- Reduce employee testing by developing a random sample for employee testing, rather than testing every employee. Some measurement should be done at the very beginning of training to constitute a pre-program measure of skill proficiency.

You still have to test employees for program placement. Understand that in using these shortcuts *you are depending on the client* to inform you about the level of skill needs. This is a risk. Remember, the premise of the WPL program you design is based on the LNA. If the premise is wrong the program will also be wrong for the workplace needs.

Case Study: Conducting the LNA

Harris and Susan speak candidly about the LNA. Harris emphasizes that an important objective of the LNA is to make sure the WPL program will focus on the needs of the workplace. The LNA provides the basis for *Learning Unlimited* to request an adequate budget to support a WPL program. Harris feels there is always a temptation to cut corners but quality costs money.

At the next Team meetings scheduling the LNA is discussed. Scheduling times and places for interviews with crew supervisors and workers and the logistics of conducting the observations are reviewed. The operations manager is worried by this and says he intends to make sure that all of this stuff doesn't put him behind schedule. They discuss how to minimize the intrusiveness of the LNA. While this discussion is nominally about 5 days of interviews and workplace observations it actually is driven by concerns about the instruction time itself. Susan and Harris suggest doing the bulk of the interviewing between 7:00 AM and 8:00 AM when the interviews will least disrupt the workflow. As the Sierra Environments staff leave the meeting they talk about how pleased they are that the *Learning Unlimited* person and "the professor" are knowledgeable and flexible about working out solutions to problems.

Harris, Aurelio and Susan begin the LNA at Sierra Environments with crew supervisor interviews. Harris explains to Susan that this will serve, in part, to assure supervisors' involvement in the process. It also makes sense to get an idea of what the bottom line is in terms of workplace problems that the program is to overcome. All the supervisors seem to agree that there are two sorts of literacy problems. One is that work is frequently interrupted because workers get to a point where they're "stuck" and don't know what to do next. The second problem is that, even after they get advice, workers still sometimes install systems wrong.

Susan and Aurelio interview a sample of workers. They complain that the system installation instructions are very difficult to understand. Some workers say they've asked coworkers for help but the crew supervisors get angry at them for wasting time. Several workers feel that when the supervisors attempt to help them they are impatient and get frustrated when a worker doesn't get the idea right away. The

instruction manuals are so big, other workers say, that it's important to find the picture of the kind of system one is working with.

Harris's observation complements the interviews with workers and supervisors. He observes that workers spend a great deal of time conferring with each other as they install the irrigation systems. Sometimes these informal conferences turn into arguments when 2 workers disagree about how to interpret installation diagrams. He also observes that the radio dispatcher's calls are difficult to under-stand, even for a native speaker of English.

Several important findings emerge from actual LNA at Sierra Environments. What seems to be an English-language problem in dealing with technical instructions turns out to rest, in part, on difficulties encountered by workers in reading performance graphs and flow charts in the manual for configuring irrigation systems. Workers have no familiarity with indexing or using reference tables to figure out how to install some of the unusually demanding custom systems the company is putting in. The English-language problem on the radios appears to relate, in part, to the dispatcher's rapid rate of speech and, while it is agreed to include some oral "radio English" content in the curriculum, this is a secondary priority. Instead, the Team decides to emphasize oral communication related to problem-solving between supervisors and workers–focusing on helping supervisors to do a better job of eliciting suggestions from workers and on teaching workers the English they need to explain the system components they are talking about.

An entirely new issue arises from the observations, an issue that did not emerge in any of the interviews. Workers, who generally reported that they had no difficulty in dealing with any of the written material on the job except irrigation system installation, when given a cloze test based on pesticide label instructions, reveal that they cannot calculate proper application rates reliably and that they are, in fact, applying pesticides at illegal concentrations. To Susan's surprise, the apparently abstract issue of ethics relating to confidentiality of LNA data becomes a real one. Sierra's operations manager wants to know which crew supervisors can't read pesticide labels. He plans to pull them out of their supervisory work.

Joe, Harris and Susan had discussed this issue as soon as they realized the implications of this finding. Joe was thankful that Harris had insisted on a clause preventing *Learning Unlimited* from sharing individual scores with the client. Only aggregate scores could be shared. They agreed it was imperative that workers not fear having their jobs or positions threatened as a result of the LNA or the WPL program. That would severely undermine the whole point of WPL. They decided to stick to the contract and hold tight against any insistence from the client to reveal individual scores.

Harris and Susan present the arguments as to why individual worker scores from the LNA should not be used in this manner. First, the workers were told that individual scores were confidential and would not be shared. Second, workers will become very resistant to participation in the WPL program. After a long discussion in the Planning Team meeting, a consensus emerges that label-reading will be one of the topics to focus on in the WPL program and that, after completion of the program, employees will be tested on label-reading ability, once they have had an opportunity to overcome their skills deficits.

On the basis of the LNA, and the information in the ***Manual***, Susan develops an estimate of the amount of instruction needed to achieve the learning objectives she has agreed upon with Sierra Environments. She then meets with Joe to put together a budget for the proposal *Learning Unlimited* will submit to Sierra Environments for a six-week WPL program, to total 24 hours of instruction–4 hours per week.

Joe reviews her budget. He increases her estimate of time required for the program preparation phase. He wants to be sure that sufficient time is allowed for preparation. He also gives attention to the costs of preparing materials to directly address the difficulties workers are having with graphic representation (which both feel is likely to require some very basic skills remediation to get going). To insure that instructional staff have time to coordinate closely with the Planning Team, they also include more time for lesson preparation than they have in other programs.

The final LNA document contains a 10 page description of the proposed WPL program, a 3 page summary of client and provider roles, a budget, and evaluation plan. The report is well received by the Planning Team. It turns out to be an important element in reassuring Sierra Environments that the $27,000 they will be spending on the three sections of the WPL program will really address concrete concerns. They feel it's good to have a tangible, professional-looking report reflecting the real work that was supported by the original $7,000 LNA project.

There was much discussion about the wisdom of having *Learning Unlimited* evaluate the program it implements and designs. It seemed to some that an independent evaluator would give a more objective report. It was pointed out that independent evaluators would be more expensive, and would not have a grasp on the particular needs of this workplace or worker needs–they wouldn't have the benefit of the hands-on experience with the firm. They could be involved from the beginning, but this would add greater cost to this item. It was agreed that *Learning Unlimited* would do the evaluation.

At Ottinger Landscaping it has been possible to streamline the LNA–in part, Susan admits, because of the work that went into the Sierra Environments LNA. But, also, Ottinger's does not need his workers to engage in the kind of complex coordination Sierra Environments does, although day-to-day problem-solving is almost as demanding for his workers as for Sierra Environments. The resulting program at Ottinger's is projected to require only 3 weeks, but the program is intended to be more intensive and Ottinger staff and *Learning Unlimited* have discussed the desirability of setting aside two entire half-days for intensive workshops.

During this phase *Learning Unlimited* and its clients have taken huge steps forward by establishing the foundation for a fully customized program tailored to the specific needs of each business. The LNA has impressed both Sierra Environments and Ottinger Landscapes in the degree to which *Learning Unlimited* has come to understand their business and their concerns. They feel that something tangible and practical will really emerge from this.

Although the planning process has taken longer than hoped and the cost of the program is higher than hoped, the collaborative process has given them confidence that they will receive the services and results they need. Although the costs are substantial, both firms feel it is likely that the program will give them an opportunity to improve their competitive position. The program evaluation effort is seen as insurance on an investment.

The bottom line is that *Learning Unlimited* has showed a degree of responsiveness. As Harris winds up his contract with *Learning Unlimited*, he assures Joe that Susan will be able to handle any new WPL projects.

Joe is pleased that Leo Ottinger (who is not known in the community as a great supporter of the school system) has told the Adult Education Director informally that he has been quite pleased working with Joe's staff.

Chapter 5

Designing the Program and Curriculum

Now that you have a contract to deliver a workplace learning (**WPL**) program, you'll use the results of the literacy needs analysis (**LNA**) to develop the curriculum and identify which employees to recruit for the WPL program. This chapter discusses these two steps:

5.1 Developing a Customized Curriculum

5.2 Designing a Participant Recruitment Plan

By the end of this chapter you should understand how to turn the findings from the LNA into a curriculum and identify and address issues related to recruitment of learners to participate in the program.

5.1 Developing a Customized Curriculum

Customized curricula are designed to assure positive impacts on the participant's ability to use basic skills in job-related contexts. They are organized around performance competencies,[1] following a functional context approach.[2] While more and more materials are being developed for the workplace, none is likely to be specifically appropriate to the site. You will have to develop your own curricula, at least to some extent.[3] The five steps involved in developing a curriculum are:

(1) Determine Objectives and Performance Goals

(2) Consider Different Delivery Systems

(3) Determine Strategies to Achieve Outcomes

[1] Examples of such competencies include reading safety signs or workplace charts, being able to use machine manuals, following company procedures, and communicating problems.

[2] Using information collected from meetings with the employer, interviews with supervisors and employees, and the LNA (including both the analysis of job tasks and workers' competencies), a functional context approach to literacy targets the skills that particular employees need, at the appropriate level. The curriculum developed then uses job-related vocabulary, materials and approaches (e.g. forms, manuals and communication scenarios). It is worker-centered and utilizes strategies and techniques which capitalize on the skills workers have in understanding and applying targeted skills.

[3] There are a variety of different staffing approaches programs have used for developing WPL curricula. These include hiring a curriculum consultant; relying on instructors to develop their own curriculum; a team approach which blends curriculum expertise, instructional expertise, workplace job requirement expertise, and learners' own perspectives; and leaving development of the curriculum to workplace training personnel. WPL program managers seem to agree the most successful approach is team-based.

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(4) Develop Curriculum Outline and Lesson Plans Based on LNA

(5) Develop an Evaluation Approach

The test of a good curriculum is whether program participants learn, are able to retain, and can successfully apply the targeted skills in the job context and the efficiency of the instructional process in enabling them to do so. **Exhibit 5-1** provides you with criteria to use as you follow the steps, described further below, in developing your curriculum.

Exhibit 5-1 Curriculum Principles

1. It targets job-related skills identified in the **LNA**.
   Principle: Research indicates that people learn more rapidly and are able to retain more of what they learn when job-related materials and tasks are used in instruction.
2. It includes job-related problems and simulated situations that call for the use of basic skills as they are used on the job.
   Principle: Teaching literacy in a job context, using a functional context approach, is more relevant for workers and therefore more motivating.
3. It uses actual job materials as instructional texts.
   Principle: The more a learner can identify with and understand the purpose for learning a skill, the more efficient the learning is likely to be.
4. It builds on the employees' knowledge of what's needed to do the job.
   Principle: Researchers have found that background knowledge can account for up to four grade levels of reading ability with a given topic and print format. Building on that knowledge enhances ability to apply newly acquired skills.
5. It provides opportunities to link basic skills to critical thinking.
   Principle: The more a learner can test how to apply new skills, the more a learner will be effective in using them appropriately.
6. It gives employees the opportunity to work together and learn from each other.
   Principle: The social context of learning is a very important support structure for the learner.
7. It is linked to the goals of the company and participating employees.
   Principle: Successful WPL programs have support from all levels of the organization.

The Planning Team should be significantly involved in the curriculum design process. A good curriculum for developing workplace literacy skills requires knowledge of the tasks and materials that fit the specific job contexts of the worker.[4]

[4] Skills taught in traditonal or generic basic skills classes appear to have little direct transfer to the performance of job specific basic skills tasks.

(1) Determine Objectives and Performance Goals

Program objectives should be based on the LNA, should reflect the needs of the organization, and should be stated in job-related rather than educational terms. There are two issues to cover in this step: [1] prioritize objectives and [2] plan how necessary feedback on outcomes will be obtained.

In the LNA, a number of objectives may surface—a number greater than you can address at one time. In your curriculum development process you should prioritize the objectives to reflect workplace concerns. The aim is that the objectives first achieved will be those most important to the employer; and the skills focused on in the instructional process will be instrumental to achieving those objectives.

The functional context has implications for obtaining feedback on the effectiveness of the instructional process. Learners have to be able to apply the skills they acquire successfully; and the curriculum should be adaptable to facilitate learning. The WPL program curriculum framework you develop has to be able to change in response both to specific client concerns and to your assessment of learner progress in attaining skills.

(2) Consider Different Delivery Systems

There are a variety of methods for delivering instruction, and each of these should be considered when formulating your program strategy. They include[5]: class-based instruction; technology-based instruction in a laboratory environment with instructional personnel available; technology-based instruction without immediate access to instructional personnel; and video-based instruction.

While these are distinct methods, they are not mutually exclusive. The curriculum delivery plan you devise should include whichever of these methods are likely to be effective for your client and fit within their cost parameters. Issues that should be considered in conjunction with decisions about the delivery system include level of learners' initial skill proficiency in English, employees' comfort with use of technology and use of it in their job, trends in the workplace, the ability to customize the technology to fit specific program objectives and learners' skill needs, need for social support for learning, as well as technology cost and staff expertise in working with it.

The delivery strategy(s) selected should efficiently and effectively address workplace learning needs in a given situation. Workplaces which have multiple sites are distant from each other, or are so small that employees may not be able to attend classes at a common time. They may find a flexible instructional delivery structure attractive for them, such as the technology-based laboratory environment. Other settings, where prospective learners have very low literacy skills, may find class-based instruction more efficient. Some programs, with a wide range of learner needs, may combine several delivery strategies.

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[5] See the Glossary for further description of these terms.

Actual materials from the job should be used, including signs, manual excerpts, reporting forms, etc. Software or courseware should be reviewed for their appropriateness to the job context, culture and language (See the software review form presented in **Appendix F-1**.)

(3) Determine Strategies to Achieve Outcomes

This step involves decisions about the appropriate program length, instructional approaches, and sequence of instruction to support WPL objectives, taking into account instructional delivery strategies. In addition to mode of instructional delivery, there are three primary issues: [1] individual assessment and placement methods, [2] scope and sequence of the program and its materials, and [3] implications for instructional sites and class groupings.

Instructional methods have to be found that accommodate different proficiency levels. Learners should be taught in a way appropriate to their proficiency level and instructional needs.

Material presented should be sequenced in terms of importance on the jobs. All the skills needed to enable employees to perform a task competently should be taught together, in a way which encourages learners to actually use them on the job. Employees should be encouraged to take responsibility for learning and testing the adequacy of newly acquired skills. Successfully crafting a team approach to instruction will assist you to monitor how well the program is achieving its aims. This continual process improvement is central to a successful WPL program.

Design of a supportive learning environment also is important. This entails knowing the services available in your community as well as those offered by the client organization. You should take the opportunity of what you learned in the LNA to develop support mechanisms for program participants. This may be identifying childcare, transportation, and personal support networks outside the organization. Tutors and programs outside the workplace where learners could continue on their own also are relevant.

(4) Develop Curriculum Outline and Lesson Plans Based on LNA

The curriculum outline and lesson plans should identify benchmarks of progress relevant to the tasks participants are working on. **Appendix F-1** presents a list of basic skills for the workplace. An appropriate curriculum and lesson plan outline incorporates these skills as appropriate to enable workers to successfully perform specific tasks. There are two issues in this step: [1] identify measurable objectives and outcomes in job-related competencies and [2] review, select and create (as needed) instructional materials.

A variety of approaches used in adult education and WPL programs should be reviewed in terms of their suitability for accomplishing the WPL objectives. **Appendix F-2** presents a product review list format for selecting materials and software vendors for the WPL program. Criteria for specifying use of any technology, equipment or material should take

into account the applicability to accomplishing job-related objectives. If a specific commercial text is used, it should be supplemented with job-specific materials.

(5) Develop an Evaluation Approach

There are two primary issues in incorporating program and individual evaluation measures into your design: [1] identify stages of progress and [2] illustrate both individual and program success.

Stages of progress should be measured so that you can refine your approach. The definition of the stage should be negotiated in the Planning Team. It should be clear that you will use both subjective and objective measures, soliciting input from participants and non-participants, employees, supervisors, and management and instructional personnel. Independent measures of program impact also should be incorporated. These include demonstrated competencies within the curriculum (such as willingness to use English in the workplace) as well as relevant indicators of workplace productivity.

Exhibit 5-2 provides you with a guide for curriculum development .

Exhibit 5-2 Test for an Effective Curriculum

Identifies Organization Needs

- Specifies job performance requirements
- Identifies critical tasks and critical skills for them
- Identifies learner needs
- Determines WPL objectives
- Determines WPL program evaluation criteria

Designs Curriculum to Meet Organization Needs

- Identifies curriculum goals, objectives, and skill outcomes
- Reviews and selects instructional strategies to meet needs
- Reviews, selects or develops instructional materials and equipment to meet needs
- Obtains instructional resources
- Identifies indicators and measures of program success
- Trains staff in curriculum objectives and strategies, workplace needs, and indicators of success

Develops Appropriate Implementation Strategies

- Orients learners to curriculum objectives
- Identifies specific needs of learners relevant to curriculum and program participation
- Adjusts strategies to accommodate learner characteristics

Develops Evaluation Strategies

- Reviews, selects or develops methods to evaluate program effectiveness and efficiency
- Determines how data will be used to illustrate program strengths and weaknesses relative to curriculum focus and how it is implemented
- Develops procedures for monitoring program performance and identifying issues of concern in a timely fashion.

You should be careful not to overstate program and individual achievements. Development of an evaluation plan is discussed in **Chapter 7**.

5.2 Designing a Participant Recruitment Plan

Developing a plan for recruiting program participants (*i.e.*, learners) should accompany the design of a WPL program. There are four steps in a participant recruitment plan.

(1) Development of a Recruitment Strategy

(2) Development of a Marketing Strategy

(3) Development of Screening Criteria and Tools

(4) Development of a Program Support Network

These are discussed further below.

(1) Development of a Recruitment Strategy

Recruitment approaches range from mandatory attendance to voluntary attendance. Voluntary attendance is preferable and works best when the organization has demonstrated its support through incentives. You should work with the Planning Team to develop an appropriate strategy to identify those employees that best fit into the program and benefit from the experience.

(2) Development of a Marketing Strategy

Successful marketing of the program is required if participation is voluntary, and this should be part of the recruitment plan. Announcements, posters, newsletter, and motivational sessions conducted by management are some ways to stimulate interest in the program. Support of management and immediate supervisors is an important selling point. Incentives for continuing participation and attaining desired skills should be part of the strategy.

While management support for participation is critical for success, WPL programs also seem to have more success if the client pays all or part of workers' cost in attending the class. If classes are held away from an employee's job site, paying for transportation and or childcare often is important to allow the employee to attend. Beyond the paying, in some cases employers may have to provide the transportation, as workers may not have access to transportation. Incentives which are material and visibly beneficial to participants seem to work best.[6] Other incentives include client management offering a reward only to those learners who reach a certain level of competency, client management hosting a party and graduation ceremony. The nature of the incentive and how it will be offered should be worked out with the Planning Team.

[6] This is as reported to the developers of this handbook by program providers.

Whatever approach is used to encourage participation, it is not likely to be successful if the program name stigmatizes participants in some way. Words such as "remedial," "basic skills," or "literacy" should not be used. It's preferable to use terms indicating special knowledge, such as "Assembler lab" or "Communications for Customer Services". The Planning Team should select an appropriate program name.

(3) Development of Screening Criteria and Tools

Participants should be assessed for placement purposes as well as to obtain a pre-program record of proficiency in targeted skills. Tools for screening participants and developing an individual learning plan need to be considered. Two criteria are important to consider. First, it should be relevant to the skills targeted in the program. Second, it should be appropriate to the workplace context.

Many programs use standardized tests. The advantage is that they are standardized and can show pre-post skill gains in some situations, at least with regard to academic skills. The disadvantages are many, however. Three important ones are that **[1]** they are not relevant to the workplace and cannot show pre-post gains on workplace-related competencies, **[2]** they indicate grade levels rather than competencies, which may be demeaning, and **[3]** they take rather a long time to administer. Additionally, because many WPL programs are short and address specific subskill areas, gains may be depressed unless the assessment tool is directly tied to the instructional program.

In the selection of screening tools you should apply the same criteria as for the assessment conducted for the LNA, namely that all tools should be relevant to the workplace in language, style and format. If a standardized test is useful, you should supplement it with a performance-based pretest reflecting workplace objectives. Assessment takes time, however, and many participants dislike it. As a shortcut in selecting screening tools, some providers use the same instrument for pre- and post-test, but caution should be used as familiarity with the test may lead to over-estimating program gains.

(4) Development of a Program Support Network

Finally, means for encouraging positive interaction with the WPL program by both participants and non-participants should be considered. This is important for participant morale and motivation. Learners contacting instructors outside class times should be considered along with ways to follow-up learning after the program is over. For non-participants, including other employees, supervisors, and management, the WPL program should be advocated as a positive contribution to the workplace. A strategy including some or all of periodic feedback sessions both to participants and non-participants, including information about program events in the client's newsletter, and distribution of program achievements should be discussed with the Planning Team. They can serve to enhance understanding and supervisor support of program participation.

5.3 Chapter Summary

This chapter has addressed central issues in designing a WPL program curriculum and developing a plan for recruiting learners to participate in it. Four themes ran through both topics that should be highlighted here. Both the curriculum and learner recruitment strategies should be designed emphasizing:

- ❑ Concrete and measurable WPL program outcomes
- ❑ Benefits which are relevant to the workplace and learners
- ❑ Support for the learner and learning in accomplishing objectives
- ❑ Responsiveness to changing needs of the workplace and program participants.

For a list of literacy resources useful for workplace basic skills see **Appendix F-3**.

Questions and Answers

Q Are there any instructional principles that I can call upon in designing the WPL program?

A Yes. First, the length of instruction should be appropriate for adults to master the required concepts or skills (1-1/2 hours to 3 hours per class). The materials should be at an appropriate level of interest and relevant to adults and their work. If there are diverse levels present in the class, means for accommodating this diversity should be anticipated, minimizing time spent waiting for instructional attention. Perhaps most importantly, participants should be given the tools (information and skills) to direct or assist in their own learning. This means instruction should follow a clear learning plan and objectives, and outcomes should be visible. Instruction should be adjustable to the pace and level needed by the learner. A second principle is that participants must have opportunity to apply skills and obtain feedback on them. Instructors should consider using simulation exercises for this purpose.

Q The work is so technical and specialized, I don't have the knowledge needed to develop a soundly based curriculum using the functional context approach. What can I do?

A Working closely with the Planning Team will assist you. They can provide scenarios to use in instruction, as well as to identify critical skills in specific task sequences.

Case Study: Designing the Program

Now that *Learning Unlimited* has signed contracts with its two landscaping client firms, Susan is eager to get the workplace learning programs underway. She sets aside the greater part of two weeks to get this task completed (while, at the same time, devoting some time to staffing issues and logistics).

The Sierra Environments LNA has defined the program objectives in a fairly specific way so the main challenge facing Susan is to determine how to measure learners' progress toward meeting those objectives. Joe's experience in developing new innovative projects is useful here. He advises Susan to "keep it simple" and project solid but not spectacular achievements.

After some discussion they decide to "guarantee" that at least 80% of program participants will be able to demonstrate their ability to perform work-related "functional literacy" tasks satisfactorily as rated by their supervisors. These tasks are grouped into 5 distinct skills areas–problem-solving, oral communication in English, reading equipment installation instructions, interpreting performance graphs, and performing calculations to configure irrigation systems based on the graphs.

Naturally, each skill area includes several different competencies. For example, the oral communication skill area includes several distinct and specific communication tasks–asking assistance, guidance or clarification from a supervisor in equipment installation, requesting additional materials on the radio, explaining a blueprint to a co-worker, and responding to queries about progress during the course of the day (including unanticipated problems).

As Susan breaks down each skill area into very specific competencies or sub-skills, she notes down ideas which come to her about classroom activities to build these competencies. As she works to formulate the twelve lesson plans (they have decided on class meeting twice a week for six weeks) she keeps in mind that the LNA interviews revealed that most of the workers are elementary school dropouts and have fairly negative impressions of classroom learning. She resolves to include at least one role-playing session in each class meeting. The kinds of inter-personal cooperation needed to exchange information and to deal with the surprising range of problems that face workers each day means that the time spent on actual role playing will not be wasted (as well as livening up the class).

As she addresses the issue of instruction-reading competencies, Susan calls the Operations Manager to ask if he would make sure that *Learning Unlimited* gets a full set of irrigation equipment components (including both plumbing fittings, timers, electrical control boxes, etc.) and a toolbox to allow workers to use these actual props in exercises based on reading instructions and performing different tasks. She also asks the Operations Manager to join her for a two or three hour work session if he can spare the time. Together they will develop a continuum of actual work-related tasks–ranging from simple to difficult. These tasks will form the basis of reading and oral communication exercises in the class.

Learning Unlimited has a good selection of basic applied math texts but none of them really address the applied math skills needed to read system design tables (*e.g.*, sprinkler head installations per 100 square feet for different types of plantings) and graphs (*e.g.*, pump size in relation to irrigation system branches and sprinkler heads per lineal foot). Here, the only solution is to create some new materials to provide workers with some very basic skills in graph-reading before tackling the complexities of the actual graphs in supplier's technical manuals. Joe's secretary (who is a whiz on the computer) develops a whole series of simple graphing exercise materials.

As she proceeds through the lesson plan development in various aspects of functional literacy Susan comes to think that the fundamental skills of personal interaction as members of a team trying to solve a common problem may be an underlying part of the challenges facing the Sierra Environments workers (particularly, since the Personnel Manager seems seriously committed to the objective of in-house promotions). Susan goes to a catalogue of general management films and decides to order a film on supervisor-worker interactions from a well-known publisher. The film is not specific to the landscaping industry but Susan decides it will be possible to get a good discussion going (in English, of course) about the differences between the office workplace in the film and the on-site workplace in landscaping, while recognizing that some of the fundamental issues in worker-supervisor interactions are the same in all workplaces.

As she completes the instructional design, Susan reflects on how interesting the process is. At first, she was worried about filling 24 hours with meaningful activities. Now the question is

how to make it all fit into the amount of time available. Now that all the modules are developed, Susan spends a little time "juggling" activities to make the learning flow more easily. In principle, she had wanted to be sure that there was some activity in each skill area during each group meeting. But, in the final analysis, she decides to defer the graph interpretation sessions until the second half of the program when participants will have gained more self-confidence in their ability to grasp new material. Instead, she decides, she will emphasize oral English more heavily in the first three weeks of the course (suspecting that workers will, in part, simply need to overcome shyness). The rearrangements make the matrix of progressive movement in developing abilities in each skill area throughout each lesson a little less "neat" and "pat" but, at the same time, she feels it is more organic and better reflects the relative difficulty of building skills in each distinct area.

While part of the program design task consists of developing a strategy to recruit program participants, Susan knows this will not be much of a problem at Sierra Environments since the interviews with workers during the LNA suggest that almost everyone wants to participate in the class. More to the point, the issue is to gain supervisors' support for "their" workers' participation. Susan makes a point at the Planning Team meeting to ask supervisors if the 7-9 AM class time twice a week will be okay with them. She points out the dilemma–if the program takes less time per week out of the workers' schedule, it will take longer to reach the learning goals. But, if necessary, she tells the supervisors, the schedule can be changed for a week or two if there is a project deadline coming up. All she needs is enough warning to coordinate with *Learning Unlimited*'s instructors.

As part of "polishing" the instructional design, Susan assembles a "project lending library" of simple books in English and notes on her list of things to do to encourage instructors to "market the idea of literacy," offering loaned books for any worker who wants one as a way of encouraging informal practice in reading. The books include a selection of consumer reports on different cars and appliances. She also puts together a list of local ESL programs to hand out to workers in case some members of workers' families (or workers themselves) are interested in going to night classes in English, also.

As in the case of the LNA, the situation is less complex at Ottinger's. The curriculum, reflecting the particular concerns at the family-oriented firm, focuses almost exclusively on oral English and on team-based problem-solving. Because Ottinger Landscaping does not have as large projects as Sierra Environments it is not necessary to include the graphic interpretation material and the intensive focus on reading. On the other hand, because Ottinger specializes in more "custom landscaping," the Planning Team has recommended that some attention be given to workers' interactions with the landscaping company's clients who have complained that workers were "uncommunicative" when they greeted them, etc. Also, because Ottinger Landscaping is smaller and regular landscaping workers sometimes are called on to drive the company's van, it has decided to include a short module on taking the driver's license test since a few of the workers have had trouble with this in the past.

Given the concreteness and detail of the LNA, the curriculum design process has not been at all tedious. Instead, it has provided opportunities to be innovative and creative. Susan understands that not all the components of the new instructional design will work out to be effective. If things work as planned, great. If not (or, rather, when things do not work out as planned), then she knows that the plans will need to be modified. The pre-planning, at least, assures that even if some changes must be made, a solid instructional framework is in place. As Susan and Joe meet for him to review the draft curriculum, they discuss the main issues to emphasize in the program evaluation plan. Both agree that it would be great if the evaluation could give them information as they go along about how best to "fine tune" the program design, if not for this initial six-week cycle, at least soon after, in time for the second cycle of the program.

Chapter 6

Program Delivery and Management

This chapter discusses workplace learning (**WPL**) program implementation issues. There are three chapter components:[1]

6.1 Staffing Your WPL Program

6.2 Program Guidelines and Procedures

6.3 Program Logistics

Managing a WPL program requires that the program manager build an overall framework for service delivery and respond to constantly changing circumstances. The successful WPL program is oriented toward innovation, responsiveness, and agility in problem solving—the same traits that permeate the contemporary workplace.

Program staffing, administrative guidelines, procedures, and logistics are intertwined areas that interact to determine the viability and quality of a WPL program. In many respects, the organizational strategies required to make a WPL program succeed run counter to established procedures in the public sector (*e.g.*, the standard procurement process in a large school district may result in materials arriving well after the program is completed). The art of running a WPL program rests on securing a balance between flexibility and accountability.

This chapter reviews key issues, but the prime concern is that the service provider be pragmatic and flexible while constantly trying to improve service delivery capability. Program guidelines and procedures are streamlined to facilitate staff work and to assure clarity of purpose. Success in trouble-shooting logistical problems rests not so much on neat and orderly procedures as on seizing opportunities for effective and workable solutions.

These issues are discussed in the following sections.

[1] In some programs the employer essentially operates the program (*e.g.*, hire and supervise the instructional staff; arrange and maintain the physical equipment). The provider monitors program progress. Even in these cases the provider should be aware of the entire range of implementation issues and monitor the full range (including staffing and equipment) to identify critical factors affecting program success.

6.1 Staffing Your WPL Program

There are many issues to consider in staffing a WPL program; two major areas are:

(1) Staff Responsibilities

(2) Staff Orientation and Development.

Each of these is discussed in detail in the following sections.

(1) Staff Responsibilities

There are a variety of roles and skills necessary for offering a WPL program. The need for expertise does ***not*** mean a separate position is required for each role. Often staff will fulfill multiple roles; other times expertise will be obtained outside the organization.[2] How you staff your program will depend on a variety of factors. No matter how many staff are involved, the following staff activities are needed. A matrix of staffing roles is presented in **Appendix G-1**.

Exhibit 6-1 Job Tasks for a WPL Program Manager

- Negotiate and administer agreements
- Develop and monitor program budget
- Hire, orient and evaluate staff
- Work with subcontractors
- Develop project standards, policies, and procedures
- Oversee program design and implementation
- Orient staff to curriculum objectives, strategies, materials
- Participate in the Planning Team
- Monitor and evaluate program effectiveness

❑ **Program Management**: The program manager has the responsibility for planning, organizing, staffing and controlling the project, as well as linking project operations with other organizational activities. A list of management tasks is presented in **Exhibit 6-1**.

The program manager is responsible to facilitate relationships between the WPL program and others–within and outside the organization. Managerial, communication, and team development skills as well as experience developing instructional programs and addressing workplace needs are necessary. The manager answers

[2] Such as from consultants or subcontractors.

to his or her organization and oversees the general public relations of the WPL project.

- **Program Coordination:** Coordination is different from management because it deals with the operational level of program implementation. Responsibilities such as budget management and coordination on a daily basis are included. **Exhibit 6-2** presents criteria used to structure these functions.

  Coordinating program operations requires leadership, written and verbal communication skills, and experience in staff development and supervision. The coordinator must relate to diverse work and instructional groups and have sufficient experience with adult basic education and workplace needs to identify and solve problems.

Exhibit 6-2 Job Tasks for a WPL Program Coordinator

- Serve on the Program Planning Team
- Assist in program design and staff training
- Select program facilities
- Schedule classes and enroll participants
- Assure available course materials and supplies
- Monitor program implementation
- Initiate troubleshooting procedures
- Support instructors in their work, identify issues
- Maintain necessary learner records
- Establish contingency plans

- **Curriculum Design:** Expertise in curriculum development helps assure that the program incorporates approaches to build underlying skills and job specific skills. WPL programs are relatively expensive investments. To be viable they must result in short-term benefits while building an enduring foundation for ongoing learning. This requires a curriculum which goes beyond the minimum competencies needed to "fix" a problem.[3]

  The curriculum specialist should explore the full range of instructional alternatives,[4] understand the functional context approach, ensure that the instructional approach includes the required skills[5] in the sequence necessary to accomplish program

[3] Employees who achieve only "minimum competencies" are unable to consistently meet workplace standards. Metacognitive skills ("higher order thinking skills" and "learning to learn") are transferable to new situations because they enhance intellectual agility and, often, self-esteem as well.

[4] The current status of WPL programs is characteristic of rapidly-developing fields. On the one hand there is a very solid theoretical basis from research on functional literacy that provides a foundation for effective programs. Many programs have instituted creative and innovative approaches. On the other hand, none of these approaches is available "off the shelf" in a way useful to your site.

[5] At issue are the level of instruction appropriate for learner comprehension and application of skills, the use of learners' first language other than English in instruction, the range of skills included in instructional tasks, and the proper balance of higher and lower order skills.

objectives. Without this support, instructors will have to develop this approach on their own, which may result in an uncoordinated effort and inconsistent outcomes.

- **Assessment:** Assessment expertise contributes to a successful WPL program. It is required for both the LNA and the WPL, and includes both learner assessment and program evaluation. **Exhibit 6-3** presents tasks required of an assessment person

Exhibit 6-3 Job Tasks for an Assessment Person

Review: Review workplace materials, LNA and WPL program plans for assessment issues.

Develop Approach: Develop assessment approach for the LNA, develop approach to place learners appropriately and identify progress, and develop the evaluation approach to program effectiveness. Assist with program monitoring approach and records keeping issues.

Prepare Plan: Select or design instruments for assessment, evaluation, and monitoring progress, develop sound administration procedures.

Train Staff and Conduct Assessment: Train staff how to introduce, conduct, and provide feedback to learners about assessment. Conduct assessment and evaluation.

Provide Feedback and Report: Analyze and interpret assessment and evaluation outcomes. Discuss findings with staff.

At issue are **[1]** the relevance of instruments to the workplace objectives and the actual curriculum taught, **[2]** appropriate administration of assessment instruments, and **[3]** assuring the appropriate interpretation and the utility of the findings for the program, workplace, and program participants.

- **Instruction:** Instruction can be conducted by an individual, an instructor and aide, or an instructional team, including volunteers or tutors.[6] Effective instruction requires expertise in facilitating learning, from attitudinal through application of written information required to handle specific job-related tasks. Expertise in instructional planning, orchestration of instructional activities in a variety of settings, learner management, and documentation of progress and problems are crucial for program success. Common responsibilities of the instructor or instructional team are presented in **Exhibit 6-4**.

[6] The SEIU Oakland Health Care Worker program developed an instructional team with an instructor, an aide, a counselor, and trained worker advocate. "Worker Advocates" were employees at the workplace who were specifically trained to act as workplace advocates. The advantage of using an instructional team is that more personnel may increase attention to learners. This is especially valuable in class-based situations with learners at diverse levels of skill proficiency.

Exhibit 6-4 Job Tasks for a WPL Instructional Team

Review: Understand and refine the instructional goals of the program

Develop approach: Devise and refine materials, approach, and techniques to teaching learners job-related skills in the workplace

Develop Rapport: Develop a relationship with learners and supervisors that enhances their interest in learning, their ability to gain positive outcomes, and their ability to undertake skill enhancement on their own

Instruct: Teach and facilitate adult learners' successfully mastering and applying basic skills in a job-related context

Assess: Identify progress toward goals and individual learning barriers

Troubleshoot and Refine: Observe, assess, talk with participants and workplace representatives, document findings, and develop ways to address issues

Provide Feedback: Give learners feedback concerning their progress and how to improve their learning

Liaison: Work with company personnel and program participants to enhance program effectiveness

Represent Provider Organization: Respect organizational culture of the workplace and bring problems to attention of Program Manager

Maintain Records: Maintain confidential accurate records of attendance and progress

Qualifications for instruction will vary based on the program and workplace needs. At a minimum, the following are advisable:

- Some relevant work experience in the private sector
- Awareness of job skills and attitudes required, and respect for an organization's culture
- Knowledge and ability required to teach adults to use basic skills effectively in a job-related context
- Ability to build rapport and work with individuals of different cultural backgrounds and skill levels simultaneously
- Flexibility to adapt instructional approach and content as the program is fine-tuned
- Commitment to instructing in a non-typical learning environment and format, including willingness to experiment and innovate
- Ability to establish a supportive learning environment
- Ability to exercise discretion in acting as an advocate for workers or presenting management views with which the instructor may not totally agree

A successful instructional team demonstrates flexibility in adapting to changing needs, is supportive of the learner and learning, and establishes an environment in which both metacognitive and basic skills are focused upon.

Typically, instructors are part-time, teaching in disparate locations, often new to teaching in the workplace, and sometimes new to working with adults.[7] Meeting the challenge of managing a WPL program entails developing an instructional team that has the time, resources, and energy to pay attention to delivering quality instructional services.

(2) Staff Orientation and Development

Staff orientation, training, development, and monitoring are key to building efficient and effective WPL programs to address adult basic skill needs. At issue are the knowledge and skills necessary to implement an effective WPL program, maintain clear program goals and objectives, identify barriers, solve problems, and recognize successful approaches to achieving goals. Content of orientation and training will vary among programs, but common areas of concern are:

- **Pre-Program Staff Training and Monitoring:** A successful WPL program requires a common vision of program goals and objectives, of the methods and techniques for reaching them, and criteria for assessing how well they are met. Further, success depends on staff competence at facilitating adult learning and application of attained skills in the workplace. Staff must be trained in:

  - Workplace products, processes, language and concerns
  - Curriculum framework, adult learning principles, activities
  - Technology, equipment, and materials used for instruction
  - Program and learning objectives and policies

  These issues are crucial for staff new to WPL. Even with experienced staff, broad program goals can slip out of focus in the face of daily demands. The WPL program should include a variety of mechanisms to encourage this single vision, for example, staff orientation, periodic staff assessment, and frequent communication among program stakeholders. This helps ensure that staff can use the appropriate techniques to judge if objectives are being met. Without this the program can lose focus and impact.

- **During Program Implementation:** Developing mechanisms to identify and address barriers to program and individual learner success as early as possible is important. Instructors should periodically assess learner performance and their ability to apply attained skills, and follow up on concerns.[8] Administrators should be encouraged to pursue their concerns as well.[9] Weekly activity logs, problem identification forms, and periodic program meetings or workshops are useful. Problems identified should be shared among staff along with approaches to attacking them.

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[7] Successful instructors in WPL programs have come from diverse employment backgrounds, including elementary school teacher, adult school or community college, parent leadership training in Headstart program, the Girl or Boy Scouts programs, private industry, and elsewhere.

[8] Often staff 'just have a feeling,' and that feeling is fleeting in the face of daily responsibilities. It may get lost. Observing a student not learning or a need for a change in instructional materials or focus, for example, requires attention.

[9] A sample administrator concern is scheduling does not allow enough time to follow up on absences. This has important program ramifications and should be followed up. Without encouragement, however, it may not be.

Too often successes are lost in the flood of activity, thereby undermining staff creativity and the research and development efforts of the program. Recognition can occur in staff meetings, program newsletters, and other ways. The concern is to develop a "successful methods bank" to which instructors can refer for assistance in developing or refining their approach. Monitoring progress toward program goals brings needed modifications.

The efficiency of the instructional team in facilitating learning and effective application of attained skills is a key selling point for a program. This strength depends on your ability to motivate focus on common goals, develop an effective instructional team, and monitor progress toward goals. Part of training and orientation of any WPL program should include criteria and methods for review of performance and program success, and staff instruction about how to apply those criteria.

Techniques for orienting, training, and monitoring staff performance vary in terms of ease of implementation and expense. Some include:

- Providing a reading list or materials **(References)**
- Encouraging use of a program library
- Periodic staff meetings and individual meetings with staff
- Program administrator and instructor discussion of pertinent issues brought up through individual meetings, activity logs, and learner performance assessments
- Observation and documentation of staff performance
- Structured peer technical assistance, such as class observation, communication among instructors teaching similar classes
- Attendance at workshop, conferences, seminars
- Arrangements to foster workplace supervisor and instructor technical assistance, such as observing learners in the workplace, meetings between instructor and workplace liaison (shadow work)
- Attendance at one or more industry conferences and WPL conferences

Not all of these techniques will be appropriate to your program needs or funding.

- **Post-Program Review:** Program debriefing enlarges the bank of knowledge of what works and what doesn't. Instructors, aides and learners who either leave or complete the program should be interviewed for their comments and opinions. It is also important to share program evaluations with staff and discuss factors contributing to the areas of strength and weakness.

Instructional and administrative staff are involved in each of these areas listed above, although they may have different training needs associated with each area. A summary of staff orientation and training is listed in **Exhibit 6-5**.

Exhibit 6-5 Orientation and Training Issues

Pre-Program Staff Training and Monitoring

- Discuss workplace trends, needs, concerns, and critical tasks
- Develop basic skills in a workplace context
- Review program goals, objectives, and expectations
- Adapt curriculum and materials to specific needs
- Review instructional practice
  - adult learning principles
  - curriculum goals, objectives, and activities
  - teaching strategies and techniques
  - use of equipment or technology (*e.g.* computer, video)
  - recognizing and addressing special needs (*e.g.* dyslexia)
  - record keeping and learner feedback issues
- Review learner assessment techniques
- Identify program evaluation criteria and requirements
- Program policies, procedures, and record keeping

During Program Implementation

- Recognition of successful approaches
- Problem identification and problem-solving sessions
- Special instructional and learning issues as they arise
- Staff performance criteria and how to apply them

Post Program Review

- Program debriefing
- Problem identification and strategizing
- Program revisions

Staff training time is often considered burdensome because of the hours required and the difficulty of scheduling.[10] A good guideline for staff development may be the "five percent rule" developed by some philanthropic networks and corporations. If organizational investment in upgrading the knowledge, skills, and abilities of their staff is less than five percent of total labor costs, this is probably too low to have an impact.

6.2 Program Guidelines and Procedures

Guidelines and procedures for carrying out a WPL program relate to employers' needs for minimal disruption in the workplace, a high quality program and procedures that respect employee rights. Guidelines and procedures ***do not*** have to be formal, legal documents. For smaller operations an informal list of agreed upon guiding principles may be enough. The important thing here is to realize these issues need to be discussed and consensus developed on how to handle each topic. While the specific guidelines will differ for each provider organization, sample guidelines to address key issues in WPL programs are presented in **Exhibit 6-6**.

Building and managing a successful instructional team also requires attention. Common procedures used are:

[10] It is worthwhile noting that investment in staff development and orientation are a very real part of a philosophy which favors human capital development and are likely to result in substantial (though difficult to measure) payoffs to an educational organization as well as to the workplace.

- Building networks among instructional staff in the program
- Ensuring instructors have access to staff with whom they can discuss instructional challenges or problems and develop creative solutions
- Developing mechanisms to recognize and reward effective staff performance and taking on difficult assignments, such as teaching in diverse locations or difficult schedules
- Identifying program implementation issues before they develop into problems, and taking steps to resolve them

The WPL program places great demands on instructors to integrate and apply information from very different sources[11] to implement a successful instructional program. The policy and procedure infrastructure should be designed to empower instructors and other stakeholders to utilize available resources to facilitate the success of the WPL program.

6.3 Program Logistics

Four administrative issues are important to consider at the beginning of a WPL program. These are:

(1) Scheduling of Services

(2) Instructional Facilities

(3) Supplies, Equipment and Materials

(4) Program Management Information System

Each of these areas is affected by the level of funding, the timeframe for the program, and the desires of your client.[12] Techniques for managing issues in each area and criteria for assessing successful management are provided.[13]

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11 Specifically, the workplace, learners themselves, instructional practice, and program evaluations.

12 It also is affected by the instructional delivery systems you decide to use. Programs which are predominantly laboratory-based or instructor-less learning stations raise different scheduling issues. The discussion in this section focuses primarily on class-based learning.

13 These assume some of the decision making and resource capabilities described in **Chapter 1**, and should be considered in conjunction with the information presented there.

Exhibit 6-6 Sample Guidelines and Procedure Issues for a WPL Program

Program Design

- **Needs Analysis Required**: Some form of LNA should be undertaken, even if the employer already has identified needs.
- **Customized Design**: WPL classes will be customized to a specific workplace by incorporating vocabulary, materials and procedures related to targeted tasks.

Program Assessment and Evaluation

- **Privacy**: Assessment of individual learner skill proficiency, progress and program outcomes will be kept confidential between the instructor and the learner, and outcomes reported in aggregate form, not identifying learners either directly or indirectly. The only exception is when an employee release of information has been signed by the employee.
- **Job-Related Focus**: Assessment and evaluation approaches will focus on job-related outcomes, and instruments/techniques used for assessment will be appropriate to measuring job-related outcomes.
- **Frequency of Assessment and Evaluation**: Interim assessment of participant progress and overall evaluation of program impact will help focus program direction.

Program Operation on Site

- **Neutrality in the Workplace**: Instructors will remain neutral in the workplace context, not siding with employers, unions, or employees or advocating for one of these groups.
- **Sensitivity to the Workplace**: Instructors should behave in a way which respects the workplace culture. This may include conforming to a specific dress code, informing site representatives when they expect to be on-site, and making advance arrangements if they wish to speak with program participants or site personnel.
- **Respond to Concerns**: Instructors should respond to specific site conditions, needs and concerns and discuss problems with the program coordinator
- **Advance Warning**: Instructors not able to teach class should inform the appropriate person as soon as possible.
- **Prompt Follow-up**: Accidents, injuries, or other special events should be reported as quickly as possible to the program administrator and site representative.

Program Monitoring and Program and Staff Development

- **Program Planning and Modifying**: Administrative and instructional staff should engage in program and lesson planning development and refinement activities.
- **Updating Clients**: Provider staff should establish regular meetings with Planning Team to discuss program progress, problems, concerns.
- **Troubleshooting**: All program staff should communicate frequently to identify program problems and develop strategies to address them.
- **Maintaining Program Quality**: Provider administrators should orient new staff to workplace needs, monitor program implementation and outcomes, and arrange for and participate in training relevant to addressing instructional issues and improving instructional impact, as needed.
- **Documentation of Program Outcomes**: Provider administrators should maintain an MIS (Management Information System) to evaluate program implementation, impact, and documentation in a reliable and valid manner.

(1) Scheduling of Services

Scheduling decisions should be made by the Planning Team. Support from front-line supervisors is critical for the program to be a success.[14] Beyond supervisor support, issues such as organizational culture, production schedules, viable class size,[15] the nature of program delivery, and the structure of the instructional team should feature prominently in the program scheduling. These issues revolve around the need to ensure minimum disruption to the workplace and accommodate different levels of learner skills. Each has to be weighed separately to create a viable schedule.

- **Scheduling Issues:** As with all WPL programs, scheduling is a results-oriented activity; and the results are judged by program designers, implementers, learners and clients. Essentially the test of an effective schedule lies in answers to the questions: **[1]** Is the schedule facilitating workers' continued participation in the program, and **[2]** Is the schedule compatible with workplace needs?

  Scheduling issues are perceived differently by the clients, employees, management, supervisors, and instructional personnel; yet all feel strongly about them. The framing of the class can affect the learners' ability to participate and their attitude toward the program. It is imperative that ongoing analysis of program outcomes and the impact of scheduling continue beyond the initial scheduling decisions.

  Six scheduling issues are discussed in this section. Although these issues are discussed separately they are clearly interlinked and need to be considered as a whole in scheduling decisions.

  - **Selecting Class Times:** Finding the optimum time to offer a course requires that you know when participation levels are likely to be highest. Issues that will affect participation are release time, times of the day, week or month when work flow is likely to be heavy; staff meetings, employee days off/holidays and other events. These dates or times should be identified. Courses should be designed so that employees aren't away from their work for too long, yet have enough time to benefit from the class. Some scheduling may be part of the contract, as discussed in **Section 4.4**

  - **Determining Class Size[16]:** To respect the "bottom line" of your client, classes must be small enough so that learners can receive the help they need, yet large enough to be cost-effective. Scheduling has to be sensitive to not having too many employees away from their work for too long a period. All of these considerations will vary from client to client. The size of the client's operation, the number of employees in need of services and the learner skill level all influence class size. In

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[14] Without supervisors' affirmation of the importance of the WPL program, employees' participation in it can be discouraged or undermined. It is critical to develop methods to resolve potential conflicts over time and scheduling as early as possible to avoid these problems.

[15] Viable class size, not a hard and fast number, is affected by the nature of expected outcomes, the profile of learners, physical site conditions, curriculum design, and implication from equipment and technology used in connection with the class.

[16] While this is phrased in terms of class-based instruction, the size of any group of learners is at issue.

practice, these factors have resulted in class sizes ranging from 1 or 2 learners to 14 or 15, and for classes that last about 2 to 2-1/2 hours over about a 10 to 16 week period. Classes usually meet about two to four times a week.

- **Determining Class Composition:** Pace of a class and instructors' abilities to facilitate individual learning are critical factors and are affected by class size, composition and staffing decisions. Most WPL classes are very diverse in proficiency levels and participant needs.[17] Determination of class size must take this diversity into account and address it. Sometimes incorporation of different modes of instruction help provide alternative support to learners.[18] Class instructional strategies that require stretches of time when learners wait for something to happen or areas where all work is done in large groups usually are less effective and incur complaints. At some sites, short classes using assistance from a volunteer or aide will work well; at other sites, a smaller class of longer duration but with an individual instructor will work well.

- **Lessening the Scheduling Burden for Instructors:** From the instructor's perspective, scheduling and working at different sites can be difficult. Long gaps between classes, travel from one site to another (for programs with multiple sites), and working with classes that have wide variation in skill levels act together to help the instructor feel isolated, unappreciated, and ineffective. To avoid exacerbating these feelings frequent communication between administrative staff and the instructors is recommended.[19] Work schedules should build in time for planning and problem-solving. They should foster substantial interaction both among instructors and between the instructional team and workplace personnel. Without these, the commitment to program effectiveness comes into doubt; project goals may break down and the instruction lose focus.

- **Incorporating Program Maintenance and Development Activities:** These include specifying time for instructor training and program meetings; that time is set aside for pre- and post-participation assessment, for recognizing participants' skill acquisition and course completion, and for program evaluation.

- **Selecting Team Meeting Dates:** To increase the possibility that all members of the Planning Team will attend meetings, it is wise to pre-schedule meeting times and places. These meetings cover routine reviews, progress reports and discussion of program concerns. Two meetings per month are suggested.

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[17] Because of expense WPL programs often cannot provide classes oriented to specific proficiency levels, therefore, classroom methods must find ways to accommodate the diversity.

[18] For example, either video or computer-based instruction, if they are well integrated with the program, can help provide support to learners while the instructor is working with others (*i.e.* can be of assistance in your strategy to meet diverse needs simultaneously).

[19] An example provided by one program director concerning how she addressed the outgrowth of a difficult scheduling problem was a four-pronged approach consisting of: **[1]** lacing the worst schedules with more vacation days, **[2]** providing preferential access to better schedules in the next round, **[3]** holding bi-weekly paid meetings of project staff, and **[4]** instituting a project hot-line so that instructors can call in to find out about problems ahead of time or could get help in solving problems. The line also served for site personnel who have questions or want additional help.

The way you schedule your program often determines whether the program is desired again by the client and whether the instructional staff continue to make themselves available to participate in the program.

(2) Instructional Facilities

The selection of instructional classroom should facilitate and encourage maximum program participation and continuity of attendance. There are two general issues:

- **The Decision to Conduct Instruction On-site or Off-site:** The decision to hold classes on- or off-site should weigh the likely benefits and impact on ease of attendance.[20]

  Participation barriers arise when traveling to a distant or different location. The most frequently mentioned barrier is difficulty or cost of obtaining transportation and/or child care. Other barriers are: feeling uncomfortable at another site, safety, discomfort in having to wait in the cold or heat or dark until the facility is open, and potential inaccessibility in an emergency. All of these issues are real and figure in the decision to attend the class.

  These barriers should be anticipated and weighed when choosing a site. They argue strongly for classes to be held at the workplace, close to or as part of work hours.

  In some cases it won't be possible to hold classes on-site. In many small businesses[21] appropriate space may not exist. Where businesses have joined together to sponsor a WPL program (*e.g.* multiple hospitals in an area, a group of grocers), it may not be appropriate to hold the course at one site consistently.

- **Criteria for Selection of Class Space:** The WPL meeting space is often space that has been carved out by an employer and may not be ideally furnished.[22] Nonetheless, the coordinator and instructors are responsible for designing a physical learning environment that facilitates instructional success.[23]

  Criteria to consider in evaluating the viability of a location are presented in **Checklist 6-1**.[24] Selection should take into account learning activity requirements as well as adult working needs.

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[20] On-site means at the actual work site where a learner works. Off-site means classes are held at a place other than where the work takes place. If a workplace has multiple sites in different locations within a community, on-site implies classes at each of those different locations.

[21] For example, cleaning coops, fast-food restaurants, mechanic shops.

[22] Even for classes to be held in space outside the work site, the issue of adequacy remains. Such space may be shared with other programs or used for other purposes; and how you set it up may be constrained.

[23] Space used for class have included lunch and lounge areas, special purpose rooms, individual offices, and conference areas. Hallway nooks and occupied offices are usually less successful, as they often violate the noise and self-containment criteria.

[24] See Caldwell College, etc., page. 15-18 for a list of supplies and equipment used; also, for organization of space in adult education, see Intili and Slayton, ***Facilities for the Future***, Adult Education Institute for Research and Planning, June 1991.

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Checklist 6-1 Space Selection Criteria

- ☐ **Self-Containment:** buffered from disruption due to pass-through, foot traffic or machinery noise
- ☐ **Size:** adequate space for the learners and equipment, assuring no more than two learners to a computer
- ☐ **Neutrality:** a location that doesn't stigmatize participation
- ☐ **Lighting:** lighting sufficient for adults working on the type of tasks and equipment included in the curriculum
- ☐ **Temperature:** sufficiently comfortable to encourage participate in instruction, using the specific curricula and equipment intended
- ☐ **Electrical:** access to appropriate outlets for equipment
- ☐ **Seating:** comfortable and suitable seating
- ☐ **Work Surfaces:** appropriate for individual, small or large groups, and work with specific equipment for the curriculum
- ☐ **Continuity:** space that is continuously available, reducing participation problems and reinforcing class identity
- ☐ **Amenities:** relatively near bathrooms, phone, and provides the equipment necessary such as black boards or flip charts

(3) Supplies, Equipment and Materials

The goals of the program, its length, and the funding level naturally affect the nature and extent of available supplies and equipment. The test of the adequacy of program material support is found in the answers to two central questions:

- ❑ **Do Instructors Have the Right Tools for the Job?** Managing equipment and supplies is a process of brainstorming about what would enhance program success and outcomes, and how these supplies are feasible within budget restrictions. While materials and supplies for each program will differ, there are some common categories that coincide. These are presented in **Checklist 6-2**.[25]

  The extent to which the learning environment is crafted to allow and encourage creativity, curiosity, practice of reference skills, solution of simulated real-world and work-based problems, and expansion of knowledge, the more likely it is to be successful.

- ❑ **Are Supplies and Equipment Readily Available?** Programs and classes are short so it is important that supply needs be anticipated and pre-purchased. Setting a tone that indicates serious attention to learning is part of the support the program can offer the learner. Materials will evolve as the class proceeds, based on identified needs. However, starting off with a learning packet (*e.g.*, notebook,

[25] The categories of materials and supplies presented in **Exhibit 6-2** are neither comprehensive nor specifically appropriate to a given program. Some classes use computer technology for instruction; others use televised courses; some use video and audio-tape to improve pronunciation. Other programs do not use technology at all. The point is that materials and supplies should be considered if they can support the targeted basic skills or metacognitive skills.

pads, reference and other materials) may help the program for both the learner and the instructor.

Checklist 6-2 Categories of WPL Materials and Supplies to Consider

- ☐ **Group-Writing Surface:** a white board, flip chart, blackboard, or other things for the purpose of making individual writing accessible to the group.
- ☐ **Library:** dictionaries, trade journals, job-related manuals and materials that learners can use to assist in their tasks.
- ☐ **Lesson Support Materials:** samples of work products, forms, or supplies relevant to a particular discussion; pictures of tools, machines, or people working at targeted tasks; generic pictures of people at work in similar professions performing different task functions.
- ☐ **Administrative and Learning Support:** folders, notebooks, paper, pens, pencils for participants and instructional team, photocopies of materials.
- ☐ **Technology:** computer and printer equipment, videotape recorder and player, interactive multi-media, audio tape recorders and playback, as needed for curriculum objectives and learners' tasks.[26]
- ☐ **Technology Peripherals:** earphones, speech synthesizers, and the devices that permit synchronizing tape recording with computer programs, and blank tapes or computer disks as required.
- ☐ **Interpersonal Communication Mechanisms:** telephone listings or electronic mail through which participants can ask questions, communicate with instructors, or find out about changes in class location in advance.
- ☐ **Materials Storage and Transportation Aids:** bookshelves, file cabinets or other vehicles for storing class materials and supplies between sessions; and carts for moving materials and supplies between classes.

Anticipating supplies to help the instructional team organize and maintain files also will be crucial to the program.[27]

(4) Program Management Information System

Effective program decisions depend upon good record keeping and good communication. In order to respond to emerging WPL issues the program administrator has to specify a streamlined but reliable MIS. The coordinator has to review program documentation and communicate

[26] The decision about whether to include computer work as part of the curriculum depends on computer skills or other technology required for a job.

[27] For example, organizers and secure storage areas for assessment materials are necessary if the program is serious about privacy and making assessment findings useful for the instructor. Also, in many cases, where instructional team members have to carry equipment to and from classes, considering the ease of carting the equipment is critical as well as carrying cases to keep all the various parts together.

with the Planning Team. These activities are discussed in the following sections.

- **Program Information:** Both progress in meeting program goals and barriers against reaching goals are important to document in order for the program to learn from experience. This involves maintaining individual learner records as well as notes of critical events in program implementation. **Exhibit 6-7** indicates the types of information that should be collected for the purposes of monitoring program performance.[28]

  Gathering information is only part of the process, however. Documentation has to be reviewed, interpreted, and translated into program implications. Based on the findings from this review, the Program Coordinator should formulate issues for discussion with Planning Team about the level of learner progress, factors outside the program that might be affecting it, how to enhance it, and how to remove any barriers impeding positive program impact.

- **Planning Team Communication:** Based on issues raised in your review of program documentation the Team should be used to brainstorm ways to enhance the program and its impact on goals. Issues on which feedback might be gathered include:

Exhibit 6-7 Information to Gather for Monitoring Program Performance

Participant Characteristics (e.g., schooling, initial language ability)

Participant Attendance

Implementation Concerns and Solutions
- Special Learning Problems
- Program Activities Undertaken
- Feedback from Learners
- Supervisor Attitudes and Observations Regarding the Program

Program Outcomes
- Specific Competencies Achieved
- Specific Comments on Worker Performance
- Changes in Learner Perspective and Morale

  - **Participant Attitudes and Attendance:** It is important to follow up participants who have been absent consistently. Their absence could be a clue to issues that should addressed. Learner needs for personal support could surface, as could the need to provide tutoring or extra assistance (*e.g.*, learners with limited proficiency in their first language). Absence also could reflect lack of supervisor support or other dynamics.

  - **Implementation Concerns and Solutions:** Often there are sensitive topics such as career development, life skills, employees' rights, or work rule issues covered in class. The Planning Team should assist in identifying sensitive workplace

[28] Note that documentation for program evaluation purposes overlaps, but is discussed separately in Chapter 7.

issues. It is important that the program and the instructor remain neutral while teaching the skills required to operate in the workplace.

The organization may need to reclaim the class space or reassign workers, both of which will affect participation in the program. Classes may need to be established on a rotating basis, following the rotating shifts of workers; and supervisors' commitment to the program may need to be underscored.

- **Program Impact:** Information on program impact should be solicited, apart from the program's own documentation. Solicit suggestions about where the program needs to be revised or ways to make participants' learning achievements more visible and meaningful.[29]

- **Workplace Changes That May Affect the Program:** It is important to learn of anticipated changes in workplace technology or structure that might affect what skills are needed or how they are used at work. Increased emphasis on teamwork, for example, affects the level of communication skills needed. Plans to lay off workers in a particular area, and even to hire workers, affect the morale of participants in your classes and the kinds of tasks your instructors might be asked to address.

It is crucial to systematically obtain feedback both from participants and non-participants in the program concerning what they see and expect to see from the program.

- **Identified Program Issues:** The Planning Team should synthesize the information collected about the program and formulate an approach for enhancing program impact. In some cases this might mean continuing as is. In other cases it will not. Whatever the findings, they should be recorded along with the strategy for addressing any problems uncovered.

All of these program areas are important to monitor in order to keep the program as effective as possible. Any one of these issues can become a major problem diverting energy from the WPL goals or completely disabling the effort.

6.4 Chapter Summary

This chapter addressed a range of WPL implementation issues: staff roles, staff development, and logistics. On the basis of the information provided here, you should develop (or have):

[29] For example, in one WPL program during a Planning Team meeting, one supervisor confessed that she did not see any of the desired changes, even though she saw people busily attending classes. Upon further discussion two factors were discovered. The first was that she did not know what she should see (her expectations were that people would move from very low levels of English proficiency to conversing fluently in English during work). The second was that the classes held were not instructing participants on how and when to apply their skills in the workplace. Without this systematic communication with the Planning Team this problem would not have been uncovered; and both attitudes toward the program as well as outcomes from it might have decayed.

- ❑ An organizational structure reflecting the expertise needed to deliver your WPL program.
- ❑ Job descriptions reflecting the responsibilities entailed in carrying out and maintaining high quality in your WPL program.
- ❑ Techniques and procedures for supporting staff in carrying out their roles and monitoring staff and program performance
- ❑ Criteria for developing an appropriate program schedule, equipping program space appropriately and monitoring its effectiveness.

Running a successful WPL program is much like operating any business. The program coordinator has to anticipate the conditions that are likely to affect program success, monitor the implementation of the program and adjust as is necessary to remain responsive, and to determine ways to improve the efficiency and effectiveness of the program. Continuous process improvement is central to the implementation issues discussed in the chapter. The demands placed on staff under these conditions are to be reflective and creative in thinking about program issues and marshaling resources to address them. Management activities have to support staff and program effectiveness.

Checklist 6-3 summarizes the information provided in this chapter in the form of an implementation checklist. Answers to the questions posed in it should provide direction for program management and monitoring. With the checklist, it should be clear that managing program implementation entails not only facilitating the immediate program outcomes, but also focusing on opportunities for improving the efficiency and impact of the program.

Checklist 6-3 Implementation Check List

Are Program Goals and Objectives:

- ☐ Articulated, both instrumental and overall goals?
- ☐ Linked to expected learner competencies?

Are Staff Oriented to and Able to Work with:

- ☐ Workplace values, needs and concerns?
- ☐ Program participants' needs and concerns?
- ☐ Program goals, and objectives?
- ☐ Their responsibilities?
- ☐ Others' roles and responsibilities in the program?
- ☐ Program guidelines and procedures?
- ☐ Criteria for performance evaluation?
- ☐ Curriculum objectives, instructional activities, and materials?
- ☐ Resources available to help them with their work?

Does Scheduling Take into Account:

- ☐ Workplace needs and culture?
- ☐ Barriers to program participation?
- ☐ Time needed to develop specific targeted skills?
- ☐ Logistical concerns and training needs of instructional team?
- ☐ The profile of learners in the program?
- ☐ The nature of the curriculum and intended outcomes?
- ☐ The time needed for learner assessment and evaluation?

Does the Selection of Meeting Space:

- ☐ Facilitate learning activities?
- ☐ Encourage program participation?
- ☐ Provide program continuity?
- ☐ Allow use of appropriate instructional technology?

Do Materials, Supplies and Equipment:

- ☐ Suit the workplace context and build job-related competencies?
- ☐ Facilitate development of requisite cognitive skills?
- ☐ Encourage curiosity, problem-solving, self-directed learning and other metacognitive skills?

Program Monitoring and Documentation

- ☐ Does program documentation assist in:
  - o Identifying program strengths and weaknesses?
  - o Suggesting needed program expertise and resources?
  - o Setting priorities for addressing problems identified?
- ☐ Are stakeholders and the Planning Team:
  - o Aware of program progress and activities?
  - o Providing feedback about program concerns?
  - o Assisting in troubleshooting?
- ☐ Is program organization and management supportive of successful program implementation?

Case Study: Program Management

Learning Unlimited has successfully completed the WPL program development phase for two landscaping firms. Some important, practical items remain on Joe and Susan's agenda, however.

Staffing the Program

Four class sections, three at Sierra Environments and one at Ottinger's, are scheduled to begin at 7AM and still have to be staffed. This is a problem since most of *Learning Unlimited*'s regular classes are scheduled in the evening, 7-10PM. Naturally, few of the staff are eager to be up at 5AM. Beyond the issue of staff willingness is staff suitability. Joe and Susan have to decide which staff will be best prepared to teach these courses. Joe realizes that the job of a WPL teacher is slightly different from others, and decides to develop a job description to make this clear when talking with potential instructional staff. Besides regular staff, he has to have a pool of substitutes on call. Ottinger put into the contract that *Learning Unlimited* will have to pay for employee participants' released time if the instructor does not show.

With Joe's concurrence, Susan decides to teach one section. She feels this will give her a hands-on sense of how the curriculum works, what problems are encountered, and a basis for staff support.

Two other sections are assigned to Eliseo Rojas —a part-time instructor for Joe—in remedial math and science under an alternative program for "at risk" youth. This is now being cut, but Joe was impressed with Eliseo. He had arranged three science field trips for his students—one to a biotech firm—dealing with all the logistics and, apparently, successfully "turning the students on" to science. Eliseo also had talked to Joe about the literacy problems his students faced when they found a job; it was like another world to them. Joe realizes that even though Eliseo meets most job criteria, he has little experience in ESL instruction. Susan and Joe weigh the hiring trade-offs. Eliseo has tutored learners with English as a second language; he has worked with adults previously; he has experience gaining entry into workplace environments and preparing older youth for those environments; he has shown initiative and flexibility. They decide to hire him.

Susan meets with Eliseo, goes over the job requirements, program policies and procedures, and the contract. He will teach one Monday/Wednesday section and one Tuesday/Thursday section. Susan then discusses the issue of orientation and training. She asks Eliseo to set aside two days during the next week. One day to review Sierra's own job descriptions, workplace materials and the curriculum developed for them. The other to review ESL teaching techniques and instructional strategies for accomplishing the program objectives. She gives him a packet of articles on successful workplace learning programs, and tells Eliseo that she would like him to take part in a workshop to give him a bit more depth in dealing with the communication and language learning issues he will be addressing. He agrees if his registration fees are paid. He sees the WPL program as a way to get involved in an important and booming field. On an ongoing basis, she asks Eliseo to set aside 2 hours each Friday to meet and talk over class issues. Some of these will be staff meetings; his time will be paid.

The Ottinger Landscaping section still remains unfilled. Susan asks Joe for permission to advertise for an instructor. Joe notes that an innovative and workable solution might be to contract with the Pacific City Employment Center (**PCEC**), a community-based organization that has been involved in a variety of JTPA-funded programs for the past ten years. PCEC's experience in offering vocational training, job search workshops, and concurrent ESL (ESL for limited-English participants in vocational training programs) makes it well suited to address the communication issues in the WPL program curriculum. Joe assures Susan that the coordination and accountability issues will be dealt with directly in the contract. PCEC has a good track record with performance-based contracting, so he feels optimistic that an agreement which makes concrete demands on them and includes performance monitoring as a bonafide activity will work.

Logistics and Management

The next two months are stressful and exciting for Susan, Eliseo and Martha Griffith, the PCEC instructor. First, Leo Ottinger calls Susan, asking if she thinks it's wise to assign a female instructor to teach the WPL program for his firm. Susan gets Martha's resume and reviews it with Leo--an AA degree in electronics, six years in an engineering battalion of the National Guard, ten years teaching a range of vocational training courses. Leo is surprised and agrees to defer to Susan's judgment. She suggest he drop by to

observe a session, during week #2 of the class, but cautions that he probably should stay only a half hour or so, to make the best use of class time. She arranges with Martha to expect him.

Then Martha arrives one day and discovers her space at Ottinger's has been taken over. She scrambles and locates space in the basement with the help of the WPL Liaison, but makes a note to find out if this will be a continuing problem. She finds it depressing to teach there and the participants are upset at the move as well as the new location. She wonders if she should take it personally. Susan tells her there is a contract clause stipulating the desirability of class space continuity, and they were supposed to let her know ahead of time, but that any given space is not reserved and Martha may have to make do. She will talk with Leo Ottinger. She hopes they can identify a more congenial location.

The next crisis comes when the Sierra Environments operations manager notifies Susan their production schedule has fallen behind, they have a "push" on to avoid a late penalty, and some students may not be able to come to class. Susan suggests alternative scheduling: (a) 2 night sessions instead of the morning sessions, (b) a special Saturday double-length session, (c) individual tutoring for the workers who have to miss the class. He agrees to consider these, and Susan asks Eliseo to come up with recommendations. When Susan calls the manager back she reminds him that Sierra Environments agreed to pay the workers' released time for their class participation and that the agreement should hold for all of the alternatives. They agree to the Saturday session the class recommended.

Toward the end of the program the worst crisis arose: a crew supervisor for half of the workers in Eliseo's M/W session called the operations manager to complain the WPL program was undermining his authority. The manager called Susan to ask what was going on. It turns out that a worker told the crew supervisor that it wasn't right to criticize his work the way he was doing--the WPL instructor had told them how supervisors should treat workers. Susan suggests that she, Eliseo, the operations manager, and the complaining crew supervisor meet together and talk about what is actually taught in the class (the proposition that criticism should be "constructive" and oriented toward a specific "corrective action") and the individual learners' interpretation. By meeting together and reviewing common objectives (improved team skills in problem-solving) the whole issue is quickly resolved. Susan and Eliseo agree they will be more sensitive to the consequences of new learning. The Crew Supervisor and Operations Manager come to understand that a WPL program means more than improved literacy; that newly acquired skills have to be used and this should be built into the program strategy from the workplace standpoint.

Staff Development

Susan, Eliseo and Martha meet every other week to review their class experiences. Susan is relieved to discover that Eliseo can give her some good suggestions on teaching the technical materials. He suggests graph overlays on transparent sheets as a tool for teaching the elements of graphing. Martha's tremendous creativity in adapting the curriculum "homework" exercises to address individual participants' strengths and weaknesses are an important contribution to managing the diverse skill levels of the program participants. The group decides to maintain a "trouble-shooting diary" of their meetings which they will use to strengthen the curriculum the second time around.

Short celebrations have been scheduled for the last day of classes, where certificates of attainment are awarded to participants who have attended 80% of the classes and mastered key skills. The next day the program staff meet for a half-day session, while impressions are fresh in their mind, to debrief and discuss needs for program modification. Reviewing their notes and notes of the evaluator they hired, they discover document reading and graphic literacy have gone well and learners have shown the needed gains. The issue of how to teach problem-solving is still muddy, however. The teachers observe that most of their students seem to have enjoyed this part of the course enough to work on it a lot on their own time, so perhaps some post-program skill support would be useful. The amount of time practicing oral communication in English also was a problem in some classes. They will have to work on this. A bit apprehensively, Susan now schedules a discussion with Joe. Joe says he understands that no program is problem-free, and is looking forward to the evaluation report to see clearly what worked and what didn't. He tells her, he feels things went well. He received extremely positive calls from Sierra Environments and Ottinger, and a meeting is scheduled to discuss procedures for offering a second cycle of classes. By the way, Joe announces as he winds up the meeting, "It looks like we are going to be meeting with Nanosecond Technology (a large local electronics manufacturer) for an exploratory planning session next Tuesday. I hope you can make it."

Chapter 7

Program Evaluation

Evaluation is used here to refer to a process which starts at the beginning of the program and continues throughout it, is conducted in collaboration with project stakeholders, and collects and organizes data.[1] Each workplace learning (**WPL**) program is designed to meet specific job-related objectives, and all stakeholders have an interest in seeing that it does.[2] Central evaluation questions are:

- Has the program resulted in improved literacy skills for participants? Did the program meet its objectives? To what extent? In what ways? For whom? and Why or why not?
- Was the program worthwhile to participants? Did they enjoy it?
- Have improved literacy skills resulted in improved job performance, behavior, or productivity? To what extent? In what ways? and Why or Why not?
- What are the implications for future programs or efforts?

To be useful, the evaluation has to: **[1]** provide objective data in a timely fashion, **[2]** have data that are reliable and meaningful, **[3]** be as efficient as possible, imposing minimal burden, and **[4]** share and use the results. This chapter aims to help you meet these requirements. Chapter components include:

7.1 Components of an Evaluation Strategy

7.2 Evaluation Issues

7.3 Data Collection Methods and Sources

7.4 An Evaluation Plan

7.5 Data Analysis and Interpretation

7.6 Use of Findings

WPL programs differ in size and how directly they are linked to an organization's product or productivity. The scope of the evaluation, and what it focuses on, should reflect these program differences. The importance of evaluation for enhancing the capacity of both the provider and the client does not change. It is the only way to objectively view experience and systematically learn from it.

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[1] Evaluation differs from assessment. Evaluation deals with overall program performance. Assessment refers to individual participant performance.

[2] Employers have invested time and money to improve their workforce; program participants have invested their time and energy; even those who are less immediately involved have justifiable concerns about the outcomes of Workplace Learning programs.

7.1 Components of an Evaluation Strategy

Evaluation of program effectiveness in essence compares the actual program as implemented to its stated goals. The first step in conducting an evaluation is formulating a strategy to find out what you want to know. Key components of an evaluation strategy are depicted in **Checklist 7-1**.

Checklist 7-1 Components of an Evaluation Strategy

Issues: Determine what issues to examine

- ☐ Develop evaluation questions
- ☐ Identify data needed to address questions
- ☐ Discuss evaluation focus, data needs, and procedures with Team

Methods: Determine the appropriate evaluation method

- ☐ Identify issues each interviewee/respondent should be asked about
- ☐ Identify types of information they can provide
- ☐ Identify methods suitable for each participant and issue
- ☐ Develop data collection forms or instruments, as needed
- ☐ Specify criteria for data collection to yield reliable, valid and useful data
- ☐ Specify frequency for data collection to make evaluation data timely
- ☐ Identify benefits and burden for participants in the evaluation

Administrative Procedures: Develop an evaluation plan

- ☐ Specify roles, responsibilities, tasks and schedule for data collection
- ☐ Specify data handling procedures ensuring confidentiality and quality

Analysis: Determine analyses to be conducted

- ☐ Identify analyses to use to address evaluation questions and concerns
- ☐ Specify data needed to conduct these analyses
- ☐ Specify how analyses will be reported and their utility for stakeholders

Findings: Determine how findings will be made available and used

- ☐ Discuss how findings will be shared within and outside of the company.
- ☐ Distribute, discuss and use the findings as relevant.

Each WPL program's evaluation strategy will be different. Who conducts the evaluation and how much is allocated for it also will vary by program. Some WPL programs will choose to subcontract the evaluation for example. Whoever conducts it, it is very important that the evaluation is planned at the beginning of the WPL program in close cooperation with the Planning Team. Be sure both your concerns and

those of the client are addressed in a way that is useful for program improvement and decision making.

The budget for the evaluation should be included in your proposal to the client to conduct the WPL program (**Checklist 4-6**). Money should be allocated for :

- ❑ Formulating the evaluation strategy and meeting with the Team.
- ❑ Developing or identifying and obtaining data collection forms.
- ❑ Collecting the data you want and organizing it for analysis
- ❑ Analyzing and interpreting the findings
- ❑ Reporting conclusions and meeting with the Planning Team.

The two areas of highest expense are collecting data and interpreting the findings. Much of the data should be available through your MIS, however some will not. Be sure to think about ways to reduce cost and obtain the information you need to improve and document program effectiveness.

7.2 Evaluation Issues

Five evaluation concerns are common to all WPL programs:

(1) Stated Program Goals and Objectives

(2) Program Participants

(3) Program Organization and Resources

(4) Program Implementation

(5) Program Outcomes

The evaluation content should reflect the concerns of stakeholders (*e.g.*, instructional team, program manager, participants, employer representatives, and program personnel). **Checklist 7-2** provides a summary.

(1) Stated Goals and Objectives of the Program

Good evaluation requires that objectives and outcomes be measurable. Initial and ongoing assessments of learners' skill should be designed to reflect not only acquired skills but the ability to apply them to job-related tasks. The evaluation should focus on how well the intended linkages between instruction, literacy and job related skills have been forged.

Checklist 7-2 The Five Primary Evaluation Areas

Stated Program Goals and Objectives

- ☐ Were the stated goals and objectives achieved?
- ☐ Did the achieved goals result in improved job performance?
- ☐ Were program goals appropriate, in hindsight?
- ☐ What goals and objectives are implied for a future program?

Program Participants

- ☐ What affected program implementation and outcomes?
- ☐ Did subgroups of participants gain more than others?
- ☐ What subgroup characteristics affect participation and outcomes?

Program Organization and Resources

- ☐ Did program management and resources facilitate effectiveness?
- ☐ Were resources used efficiently?
- ☐ To what extent did program structure contribute to quality?
- ☐ Were the anticipated resources made available as planned?
- ☐ What additional resources were needed (if any)?
- ☐ How did physical context (facilities) affect program outcomes?

Program Implementation

- ☐ Was the program organized and implemented as planned?
- ☐ Were staff adequately trained to implement the program?
- ☐ Was the planned curriculum implemented?
- ☐ Were the planned materials, equipment, and resources used?
- ☐ What sorts of learning experiences were provided?
- ☐ What sorts of learning support was provided?
- ☐ Did program implementation reflect workplace priorities?

Program Outcomes

- ☐ Did participants find the program worthwhile
- ☐ Do program outcomes have an impact on targeted job performance–productivity and bottom-line issues?
- ☐ Are program outcomes perceived by the range of stakeholders?
- ☐ Will program outcomes transfer to new task or job requirements?
- ☐ What additional training needs are evident from the program?
- ☐ Are program achievements useful and relevant to workplace?
- ☐ What are the implications from program achievements?

Such factors as participant attitudes, morale and self-confidence in using skills, and how newly refined skills are recognized and utilized in the workplace affect program outcomes and job performance. These factors are crucial to take into account in the evaluation process, to understand clearly program strengths and weaknesses.

Also critical to consider are long-term as well as short term outcomes. Short term outcomes are those immediately visible from the program; longer term outcomes are those expected given current levels of program impact and anticipated changes in work process or technology.

One important caution about developing your evaluation questions: Remember that because of the complexity of measuring behavioral change, you should be careful to assess attained skills separately from whether the attained skills resulted in a positive impact on job performance. Factors that might impede demonstration of impact should be considered; for example: did the employees actually use their new skills outside class-based tasks? Part of the "why not" may be that there was an indirect relationship between the learned skills and job performance,[3] not knowing when to apply skills, self-confidence in using newly acquired skills or inability to monitor problem solving success.

(2) Program Participants

The characteristics focused on include personal as well as organizational attributes, and may be suggested by the Planning Team itself. Commonly examined characteristics include pretraining skill levels, participant gender, age, job category of participant, and whether program attendance was mandatory.[4] These or other characteristics may affect a participant's attitude toward the program, ability to participate in it, or need for specific learning support.

(3) Program Organization and Resources

One caution in examining program organization and resources is to separate the need for such resources from whether staff were aware of their existence and from how effectively they were used. For example, staff may not make use of resources for several reasons (*e.g.*, they were not needed, they were not perceived to be useful or staff didn't know resources existed). Each reason may have different implications for program effectiveness and how to enhance program management.

(4) Program Implementation

Program implementation is the reality test of the program design. The basic question is whether what was planned was implemented. The specific issues here relate to whether the materials and procedures designed for the program worked as anticipated and how program management identified and solved the problems that arose. A concern in evaluation of implementation is to distinguish between what is supposed to be used (*e.g.*, equipment, a particular curriculum emphasis), what is actually used, how it is used, and how prominently it figures in the learning experience.

(5) Program Outcomes

What is achieved by the program is the major evaluation question. Beyond the question of whether the program had impact are concerns about what impact means to the client and the program participants. Some evaluation concerns are, Was the level of impact worth the cost

[3] This follows the injunction in **Chapter 3**, not to promise more than you can deliver.

[4] Variation among participants on these characteristics is required to include them as an issue for your evaluation.

of investing in the program? Will the effects remain after the program ends? What follow-up would be useful to reinforce the utility of the training both for the client and participants in it? Do or can participants use newly enhanced skills in new job contexts; and how did the training help with this? and How has the client cultivated and made use of training participants received? Each of these questions bears implications for program design and contract development. And each question should be accompanied by how? or why not?

The methods selected for the evaluation should be appropriate to the questions asked and the type of data needed to address them. The next section describes evaluation methods.

7.3 Data Collection Methods and Sources

An effective evaluation strategy collects data valuable to and usable by all program stakeholders and does so in a way that imposes minimum burden.[5] Data collection methods include:

(1) Structured Interviews

(2) Focus Groups

(3) Structured Observation

(4) Learner Performance Assessment

(5) Analysis of Program Records

(6) Analysis of Employer Productivity Measures

To be effective, your evaluation should use a combination of methods as appropriate to the questions you are addressing.

(1) Structured Interviews[6]

Information most easily collected in this way is either opinion about or attitude toward the program. Members of the instructional team, other providers, support services to learners, supervisors and managers should be interviewed about program issues and outcomes. These interviews serve as a major vehicle of input for the program for stakeholders who are not participants in the program.

A number of factors affect the quality in interview data. These include interviewer training and the procedures used to arrange and schedule interviews, and the design of the interview itself (how questions are phrased, question length, interview length, question sequence, and how complicated they are to answer). Probably the most potent factor is the

[5] Of concern is burden on workplace management, supervisors, program participants, instructional staff and program provider management. Note that evaluation data and findings should be compiled in ways which respect the promises and agreements to confidentiality made to the program participants and to the company itself.

[6] See Seymour Sudman & Norman M. Bradburn. **Asking Questions**. SF: Jossey Bass, 1988. Focused questions using a category system ensure that the data are comparable across respondents. They may inhibit the respondent and sometimes they inappropriately anticipate the responses. With open-ended questions the interviewer lets the respondent answer as relevant. However, the information yielded may not be comparable across respondents; and if the respondent were asked the question more specifically, a different response might be garnered. Thus, the way in which questions are asked influences the answers you get.

degree of clarity. Unclear or unfocused questions lead to answers that will change over time (*i.e.*, are unreliable) and that really do not represent the respondent's view (*i.e.*, not valid).[7] Procedures are presented in **Checklist 7-3** to minimize these problems.

Structured interviews should be used in conjunction with learner assessment and analysis of program records to evaluate the program. Outcomes from the interviews should be well documented, showing how many people responding indicated a similar response and the range in their responses.

(2) Focus Groups

These are group interviews where five to eight persons discuss their reactions to the program. The advantage of focus groups over other interview formats (telephone or face-to-face) is the chance to hear discussion of opinions and concerns. The disadvantages lie in scheduling difficulties, potential burden on the workplace from joint absences, and possible effect of group process on participant responses. The leader has to be skilled for the data to be reliable and useful.

Checklist 7-3 Procedures for a Structured Interview

- ☐ An agenda or protocol to use for answering evaluation questions has been developed separately for each group.
- ☐ The order, wording and format for recording answers from each question have been examined to assure objectivity, reliability, and validity of the data collected.
- ☐ Information required from all respondent stakeholder representatives has been identified, and comparability of data collected across participants examined.
- ☐ Need for each question, how the data will be used by itself, or in combination with other data, to answer the questions has been examined.
- ☐ Procedure for collecting, assuring accurate recording of information, and handling collected data has been developed, which respects confidentiality and data integrity.
- ☐ Protocols, interview procedures and scheduling have been discussed with the Team as part of the evaluation design.

Focus groups sometimes are used with learners and instructional staff, separately, at or toward the end of the program. For learners, the point is to identify the impact of program context and the changes they would like to see in the program. For instructional staff, the point is to help interpret program outcomes and understand priorities for program improvement. When focus groups are used, they should supplement other data gathered. Arranging and conducting a focus group should follow the same procedures identified in **Checklist 7-3**.

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[7] For more information on reliability and validity in survey and interview design, see Sudman, ibid.

(3) Structured Observation

Structured observation should be conducted to assess the adequacy of facilities, to see how the program incorporates workplace concerns, and to see the curriculum and instruction in action. One or two observations per site should be conducted during the period the program is in full operation (*i.e.*, sufficiently after it has begun so the observation will not be an intrusion and sufficiently before the conclusion of the program so the observation can capture program progress). Observation is expensive and will never be sufficient to evaluate a WPL program, but it is a crucial tool for interpreting findings from the learner assessment.

Before undertaking an observation key observation issues should be identified, an observation structure should be developed to capture the desired data, and a form devised to record the information. Procedures to be followed in developing your approach to observation are presented in **Checklist 7-4**.

Checklist 7-4 Procedures for Conducting Observation

- ☐ Evaluation questions to be addressed with data from observations are clear.
- ☐ An observation form has been developed based on the evaluation questions.
- ☐ Need for data on each issue, how the data will be used, alone or in combination with other data, to answer the questions has been developed.
- ☐ Protocols, observation procedures and scheduling have been discussed with the Planning Team as part of the evaluation design.

Observation of classroom and instructional processes will help the evaluator understand how the curriculum is translated into action, differences among instructors in implementing the program, diversity among participants in the program, and how each of these may impact program outcomes. It is useful to conduct observations early on in the program and toward the end. Informing instructors to be observed about the upcoming observation, its purpose, and what is being observed is useful and courteous. This observation process then becomes a method for discussing and reinforcing program goals and objectives. On the basis of the first set of observations, you may want to make mid-course program corrections. On the basis of the second set of observations, you will have a clearer understanding of program implementation.

(4) Learner Performance Assessment

Learner performance assessment is at the heart of any evaluation of a WPL program. At issue are the skills targeted in the WPL program, improvement in participating employee performance of targeted critical tasks (short term gains), and application of enhanced skills to new job tasks (long term gains). Assessment should be undertaken at the point of entry into the program and at the conclusion of participation in it.

Evaluation then consists of comparing post program performance with pre-program levels of skill proficiency.

Evaluation also should examine what happens after the training has ended–do enhanced skills persist, are they applied to new work arenas?. This is the ultimate test of program impact. An evaluation should plan to assess program participants 3 to 6 months after the program has ended and compare these results with the first post-program findings. If compared with a control group not receiving training, but performing similar tasks, findings will yield implications for payoff to the company from further training and development.

A crucial issue in learner assessment is selecting the appropriate tools. The assessment approach you select must be appropriate to the workplace, the objectives you are focusing on there, and the evaluation issues. The three focuses of evaluation mentioned earlier in this section —skills targeted in the WPL program, performance of targeted critical tasks, and application of enhanced skills to new job tasks—require different assessment tools. **Exhibit 7-1** identifies the relationship between evaluation tools and purposes.

The evaluation techniques and tools listed in **Exhibit 7-1** are not mutually exclusive. Each has strengths and weaknesses and is useful for specific purposes. You have to decide the best way to assess attained skills and competencies.

Standardized tests that provide information in terms of learners' grade level equivalent or general work-related competencies are inadequate for WPL program evaluation purposes. If desired for program placement or other purposes, they should be supplemented by use of other techniques more appropriate to the workplace, relevant to the taught curriculum, and meaningful to employer and employees.

Curriculum-based measures or instructor-developed tests are relevant to the workplace, as the curriculum was designed to address workplace issues directly. Similarly, learner-based measures are certainly relevant but may be insufficient of themselves to indicate program impact. Assessing change in real or simulated performance on workplace tasks is relevant for the employer and participants and is a good measure of impact, but may not answer all the providers' questions related to program improvement. To assist with program development and modification, you may need to measure both curriculum-based skills attainment and workplace competency increases.

Exhibit 7-1 Evaluation Tools	
Evaluation Tool (See References)	**Evaluation Purpose**
Standardized test indicating learners' grade level equivalent	Academic performance relative to a high school equivalency degree
Standardized test indicating mastered work-related competencies	Level of competency relative to general skills needed by employees in all jobs
Curriculum-based performance measures	Level of attained skills in relation to curriculum learners are using
Learner-based goals and interests	Attained skills and competencies relative to learners' interests and goals
Simulated task-related performance measures	Level of attained competency relative to a specific workplace task or critical skills in workplace tasks.
Measures of productivity, cost or quality (pre- and post productivity ratings, cost indicators, absenteeism, quantity/quality of work)	Level of impact on workplace

As indicated in the above discussion, rather than relying on a single tool for evaluation, it is recommend that you use a portfolio of diverse measures of performance. This portfolio would be maintained throughout program participation and would be used for monitoring as well as for appraisal of overall program impact.

Assessment should not overwhelm the learner or learning. Assessment should be folded into regular teaching and learning activities. To be worthwhile, it should be both useful and used by instructors and learners. Only when evaluation activities are viewed as the tool they can be, will you be able to turn it into a program asset and diffuse the concern most people feel about performance assessment.

(5) Analysis of Program Records

Program records required for evaluation are essentially the same as those used in program management (**Chapter 6**). They include instructor preparation and selection criteria, the orientation and training of instructors, program management activities, equipment and resources made available and used, program implementation issues, learner progress, and support services. Program records are crucial for studying implementation issues. Procedures for using these records in this way parallel procedures for observing instructional implementation. They are summarized in **Checklist 7-5**.

Checklist 7-5 Procedures for Reviewing Program Records

- ☐ Evaluation questions to be addressed with program records have been identified.
- ☐ A records analysis form has been developed based on the evaluation questions.
- ☐ Need for data on each issue, how data will be used by itself, or with other data, to answer the questions.
- ☐ Procedures for obtaining the information, if not recorded, and handling collected data has been developed, with respect for confidentiality and data integrity.

One caution regards treatment of the data you collect. Amount of gain in targeted skills for individual learners is a sensitive issue. Agreements concerning access to learners' test scores must be respected.

(6) Analysis of Employer Productivity Measures

Appropriate indicators of program impact should be discussed with the Planning Team, along with how program participation is expected to impact them, what will be concluded from them, and how the data will be examined. Common indicators, in manufacturing, are scrap rates, error rates, or rejection rates. In service industry, indicators may be worker productivity figures, sales figures or customer satisfaction ratings. In public institutions, indicators may be number of clients served or cases completed. It is crucial that the measures of productivity selected are directly linked to program goals and objectives. These analyses are usually performed by the Planning Team or other representatives of the workplace, as these data often are sensitive and usually available only to these personnel.

7.4 An Evaluation Plan

Evaluation activities, responsibility for conducting them, schedules for when they should occur, and criteria for successful implementation should be written up as an evaluation plan. Elements of an evaluation plan are presented in **Exhibit 7-6**

The evaluation plan should specify the activities necessary (**Section 7.2**) and include procedures to ensure that data are handled properly and findings reported and circulated appropriately. Plans for distribution and feedback of findings should be discussed with the Planning Team prior to implementing the evaluation.

Exhibit 7-6 Elements of an Evaluation Plan

Evaluation Activity	Action	Schedule	Responsibility	Task Issues
1. Formulate issues and strategy: questions, data needed, data collection methods, analysis plan, and use of findings	Write up evaluation process	Program initiation	Program and Evaluation Manager	Consider: evaluation burden, benefits, cost, and workplace concerns
2. Present to Planning Team	Oral presentation summary handout	Beginning of program	Program Manager	Consider: Relevance of questions, and feasibility of strategy
3. Select staff or subcontract evaluation responsibility	Revise Evaluation with Planning Team	Prior to program initiation	Program Manager	Consider: training, skills, cost, and time necessary to implement the evaluation
4. Review each element in data collection and plan how to implement	Develop, adopt or obtain assessment or data recording forms	Pre and post program data collection	Evaluation or program personnel	Consider: data reliability, validity criteria, training needed, and data handling procedures
5. Review the program MIS	Modify to track evaluation data, as needed	Beginning of program	Program and Evaluation Manager	Consider: appropriate data format
6. Orient and train staff	Short memo, workshop	Beginning and before evaluation	Program and Evaluation Manager	Consider: data issues, participant concerns, and treatment of outcomes
7. Implement evaluation activities	Assure sufficient copies of forms	As indicated in evaluation plan	Evaluation personnel	Consider: company culture and schedule
8. Analyze data and draft evaluation findings	Not applicable	At end of program	Evaluation Manager	Consider: stakeholder concerns, and data validity issues
9. Present findings to instructional staff and Planning Team	Include copies and forms	End of program	Evaluation Manager and Program Manager	Consider: implications of outcomes, and diverse findings
10. Finalize evaluation report	Include copies	End of program	Evaluation Manager	
11. Provide feedback about evaluation	Not applicable	End of program	Evaluation Manager and Program Manager	Consider: program improvement, strengths and weaknesses

7.5 Data Analysis and Interpretation

Data analysis techniques should be selected to answer the evaluation questions specified. Three issues for all evaluations are:

(1) Meeting Goals and Objectives.
(2) Program Impact.
(3) Program Improvement.

Data interpretation is concerned with what has changed as a result of participation in the program, how much it has changed, how it has changed and the implications of the change.

(1) Meeting Goals and Objectives

Documentation and description are the main emphasis of data analysis here. Program activities, reaction to the program, type and level of participation in the program, and results from the program all are at issue. Revisit the evaluation questions identified at the beginning of this chapter; analyses and interpretation should focus on answering specific questions about what program objectives and goals were and to what extent they were met.

(2) Program Impact

Analysis of program impact is a process of identifying what the changes brought about by the program were and what they mean for the employer and employee. Two types of analyses are involved. The first is comparison of pre- and post-program skill proficiency. These data are examined in conjunction with supervisors' reports about changes in participant behavior and performance outside the program. Interpretation focuses on the significance of the extent of change for the company. These analyses the evaluator can perform.

The second set of analyses focuses directly on client measures of performance and productivity. These are comparisons of the company's own indicators of success, related to the problem they were attempting to address.[8] The emphasis is on the employers' own goals for the program; what they wanted to see changed. Although this has been said before, it is worth re-emphasizing that selection of the appropriate indicator to use is critical and should be made taking into account how program participation would affect it. In some cases, the program focus is not directly focused on the bottom line, and these analyses will not be relevant. The measures used in the analyses, who is responsible for conducting the analyses, how they are done, and how they are reported also should be discussed with the Team at the beginning of the program.

Findings from these two types of analyses should be reported separately. Data interpretation should focus on the significance of the findings for the employer and employees, in the short and longer term.

(3) Program Improvements

Data analysis and interpretation relative to program improvement focus on what the findings imply for improving the efficiency and effectiveness of program implementation. At issue are components of the curriculum, resources used in the program, materials and equipment, instructional methods, and program-employer interaction.

Analyses should combine instructor and learner perceptions of what was more or less useful for them during the program, with examination of attained skills and program impact to identify relative contribution of different program elements to program success. Additionally, these

[8] As indicated earlier, examples of these include: In manufacturing contexts such indicators may be scrap rates. In service industry contexts such indicators may be sales figures or customer satisfaction ratings. In public institutions and other industries such indicators may be number of clients served, cases completed.

analyses should take into account reports of performance of other, similar WPL programs, to examine the benefits of different implementation approaches.

Interpretation should focus on ways to make the program more efficient (*i.e.*, facilitate learning faster) and more effective (*i.e.*, solidify learning gains and their impact for the learner and the employer). Implications should be drawn about program design, resources and equipment used, the smoothness of the implementation process and service delivery cost.

7.6 Use of Findings

Findings from the evaluations should be used for three central purposes:[9]

- ❑ Participants should understand what the program did for them.
- ❑ Other stakeholders should understand the program contribution to the company.
- ❑ All stakeholders in the company and the program should understand how to sustain and enhance program outcomes.
- ❑ Documentation and marketing of program outcomes for other clients or program providers.

Program participation has represented a significant investment in time and resources for the provider organization and its personnel. It is important that the results of this effort are seen as an investment and that they be used and enhanced. Reporting the findings from the evaluation is a tool for this effort. The format, language, and circulation of the report are important, as well as how feedback about the report will be elicited and handled.

Report of the findings also should include implications for following up program outcomes. This should be subject for discussion with the Planning Team. Interim and final reports are suggested, depending on the length of the program. The interim report indicating, in aggregate form, program and participant progress and issues to consider with further implementation. The final report indicating program outcomes.

Finally, the evaluation of results also should be useful to you both as a marketing tool for potential clients and as a record of your program decisions and outcomes. Be sure to respect agreements you have made with your client about data confidentiality.

[9] Client and participant concerns about sharing program data inside and outside the company should be addressed with the Planning Team at the beginning of the project.

7.7 Chapter Summary

This chapter provided you with techniques for planning and implementing program evaluation. They entailed developing an evaluation focus, determining the appropriate methods and data collection tools, developing an implementation plan, analyzing and interpreting the data, and reporting the findings.

Questions and Answers

Q. This sounds like a very elaborate (and potentially very costly) evaluation process. How much do I really have to do?

A. The scope of the evaluation is determined by the scope of the program. Every WPL program should be evaluated. It's not such a long and complex process. A lot should be spelled out in your contract. The goals and objectives specified in your contract are the blueprint for your evaluation. At a minimum you have to evaluate the impact of the program on learners' attained skills–otherwise why do the program at all?. This requires you to:

- Identify initial goals and objectives for attained skills
- Select evaluation techniques, tools and procedures
- Discuss the strategy with the Planning Team
- Collect data, using appropriately trained staff
- Analyze and interpret the data
- Report the findings in a technical format with a summary

This minimalist approach will simplify the data collection and reporting process, but leaves the employer to circulate the findings and make them useful to stakeholders. You will have to assess learners and identify perceptions of outcomes by participants, instructors, and supervisors. Surveys can help routinize collection of these stakeholders' perceptions.

Q. I am a small provider. Should I do the evaluation myself?

A. The advantages to conducting the evaluation yourself are that you know the program and can be sure the findings from the evaluation are useful for you and the client. The disadvantages are the time and staff entailed in designing and conducting the evaluation, the training needed for conducting a good evaluation, and the lack of an independent perspective which may highlight program outcomes and implementation strategies you have overlooked.

The persons responsible for the evaluation process should be brought in at the start of the program and work closely with the program manager to ensure that the findings are germane and useful.

Case Study: Program Evaluation

Joe Lozano's consideration of the evaluation strategy for Learning Unlimited's WPL program began early—immediately after the decision to go ahead and devote a serious effort to building the program. Joe's experience with developing special projects has convinced him that evaluation must be a key part of his marketing strategy. Positive press coverage, student testimonials and photos always helped but the best support for a new program was from detailed, unbiased evaluation reports.

Selection of an Evaluator

Joe considers an in-house evaluation, but decides to focus his in-house capacity development efforts on customizing curriculum and demonstrating that Learning Unlimited can be responsive to its clients—the two landscaping firms sponsoring WPL programs. Having decided to subcontract for an outside evaluation, Joe calls his contact at the Community College, and asks if it is possible to arrange with the community colleges to conduct a program evaluation. He wants an affordable, practical evaluation, and having conducted some WPL programs on their own, they would be a good part of the program team. His colleague replies he doesn't contract for evaluations but gives Joe the names of service providers he has on file in the five-county area surrounding Pacific City who he thinks would. Joe's next step is to call the four service providers whose addresses and phone numbers he just received. In each phone conversation, Joe outlines the program design (which is now in the early period of curriculum development) and asks if it might be possible to contract for an evaluation.

The idea is a new one to some of the service providers Joe has called. They have experience in WPL programs, but they never thought of becoming evaluation contractors. Two of them think the idea is attractive. It will expand their own knowledge base, as well as bringing in useful revenue. Both tell Joe they are interested. He asks both to have individual informal meetings with him, in which he discusses his strategic concerns (quality control in the multi-site program, assessing the success the WPL effort has in addressing interpersonal communication issues) and asks for his visitor's thoughts and possible strategies. Both sketch out what seem to be acceptable strategies for the evaluation: not too much burden on the landscaping firms' personnel, not too much burden on program staff, and yet an approach which may shed light on the real-world effectiveness of the program and opportunities to make it more efficient. Joe asks both for cost proposals for no more than $4,000 (about 15%).

The winning proposal is from the Chaparral Community College Industrial Arts Department —a campus serving an urban area 100 miles south, but somewhat similar to his own community. They have had experience in occupational skill assessments and addressing basic skill needs in that context. They also have had experience doing program evaluations. Joe asks Chaparral's evaluation staffer to meet with him in 2 weeks. In the morning they will discuss the evaluation approach and in the afternoon make a presentation to the Sierra Environments Planning Team. Joe wants them to be sure they are getting an objective and independent evaluation. Susan is to be involved in the meetings as well.

Planning the Evaluation

In the morning meeting, John Leroy, Chaparral's evaluator, discusses with Joe and Susan several different outcome indicators that will measure work-related competencies and serve as the basis for a non-intrusive pre/post program assessment. One of the evaluation measures will be based on graph interpretation problems which are very similar to the types of graphed information in the manuals. The language assessment will consist of a five-minute dialogue related to problem-solving in English. The dialogue will be structured on the basis of ten tape-recorded questions which each learner is asked to answer informally. There will be a pre/post program assessment of oral English language ability. The third major measure will be comparison of pre-program assessment of workers' problem-solving competency by crew supervisors and a post-program assessment based on the workers' performance for the month after the WPL program ends. This last measure may be somewhat subjective they feel, but it does provide a valuable way to involve the crew supervisors in the program.

John Leroy discusses with Joe and Susan the desirability of a multi-faceted data collection effort and urges them to collect a small amount of background data on each program participant —*e.g.*, educational experience, self-assessed English language ability, attendance at the classes, and time with the company. John then explains that he would, ideally, like to interview all the crew supervisors, all the instructional personnel and a sample of the workers. John notes that it is important to make sure to sample some participants from each section of the pro-

gram (in case the sections differ in significant ways). The program participant interview will take no more than 10 minutes each and will precede the post-program English language assessment (which takes 5-10 minutes). He stresses that the evaluation will be a pleasant experience for the learners and instructional staff—a chance both to get their ideas heard and to reflect on what they learned and got out of the program, and what they want to do with it. All-in-all, John expects that he will only have to be on site 3 days for the evaluation, and that it will be possible to turn around a report in two weeks—in time for Sierra Environments to make a decision about a second program cycle.

Presenting the Strategy to the Team

Joe, Susan and John, the evaluator, come to the meeting with an evaluation strategy including the questions it addresses, a list of the instruments to be used to address them and how they will be used, and the outcomes from the evaluation—what Sierra Environments will get from the evaluation. John takes care to tell the Team that it will be necessary for all information on individual workers to remain confidential, as was agreed in the program contract (although the post-program assessment of participants' work conducted by Crew Supervisors will be accessible to them). He explains that he will report average gains (or decreases) in competencies, which should provide a solid basis for seeing if the program has had an impact. He cautions about expecting dramatic results, as just so much can be accomplished in 24 hours of classroom instruction even under the best of circumstances.

The Planning Team is pleased that the outcome measures are related to "real work" and make one minor, but useful suggestion. Perhaps the pre/post program assessment could include a task related to filling out a requisition form for the equipment needed to complete a project? Rick agrees. He felt it is a valid measure of worker skills and easy to implement.

The Evaluation Report

A 15 page report constitutes the program evaluation. It documents that the Learning Unlimited WPL program has resulted in observable enhancements to workers' skills—particularly in the graph interpretation and technical manual reading areas. The language gains are less dramatic; workers still do not speak fluent English, but what is noticeable is their willingness to initiate conversations with their supervisors when they are unsure about how to solve an unexpected problem. Also, they are more likely to call in when they cannot come. The activities in which they actually called the teacher and when they interviewed an actual management person really worked.

The evaluation also reviewed program implementation and recommended some improvements. With regard to the curriculum, John noted that most limited English participants do not show the same language improvements the intermediate-level program participants display. He recommends assigning an instructional aide or volunteer to work individually with some of the participants who are having a hard time. His observations revealed that workers spend a good deal of time helping each other with exercises in class. Based on this, John recommends that the curriculum be fine-tuned to introduce a few more team exercises. He hopes this will serve to catalyze the process of workers engaging in collaborative problem-solving, one of the goals of the project. Further, he notes that the organization uses computers for inventory, and he questions whether they might have expectations workers will record their own use of supplies in the inventory formula. If so, he suggests a computer be part of the next cycle. Low literate learners might reinforce their alphabet skills with keyboarding and more literate learners might practice completing forms via computer. Finally, with regard to program process, he suggests more communication between the program and Sierra supervisors. Many of those he interviewed could not identify what the program participants learned because they expected them to go from 0 to full English proficiency during the class. Monthly meetings indicating benchmarks supervisors could look for might be helpful both in supporting learning and in making effective use of newly attained skills.

Based on the evaluation and its experience with Learning Unlimited, Sierra Environments renews its contract for the WPL program at a new contract price, based on the recommendation of the aide. They did not go for the computer, although they were intrigued by the idea. They want to wait to see what happens both with the attained skills and the new class. Joe is pleased with the progress of Learning Unlimited's WPL initiative. It has taken 5 months of hard work, but they are through their first programs and have solidly documented that they have the flexibility and creativity to develop an effective WPL program. Beyond this, they have identified ways for making the program more efficient for them and their clients.

Appendices

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Appendix A

Checklist 1-1 Organizational Capabilities Checklist

Staff Capacity:	**Have**	**Accessible**	**Don't Have**
Relevant Experience and Expertise			
Scheduling Flexibility			
Adequate Time			
Workplace Communication Skills			
Subject Matter Expertise			
Adult Teaching Methodology			
Commitment to Functional Context Approach			
Administrative Capacity:			
Flexible Contracting Procedures			
Administrative and Clerical Support			
Resources for Staff Development/Training			
Hiring Flexibility			
Ability to Respond Quickly			
Budgetary Flexibility			
Experience in Subcontracting			
Adequate Funds and Resources:			
Resources for Program Start-up			
Access to Expertise in Program Start-up			
Assessment Expertise and Resources:			
Job task analysis: short/long-term needs			
Data analysis, interpretation and reporting			
Cross-cultural awareness			
Adult learning problems			
Special population needs (ESL, illiteracy)			
Curriculum and Materials Resources:			
Methods for prioritizing skill needs			
Adult, job-specific needs of employees			
Strategies for overcome learning barriers			
Approaches to special populations			
Strategies to develop learner confidence			
Strategies to build metacognitive skills			
Instructional equipment and supplies			
Linkage to Other Programs:			
Aware of resources from other programs			
Cooperation with other providers			

Checklist 2-1 Elements of an Internal Marketing Strategy

Clarify responsibility. Can the WPL program manager:

- ☐ Determine to offer a specific service or program on behalf of your organization?
- ☐ If not able to personally commit your organization, locate a person who can, and obtain approval quickly?

Identify resources. Do you know about:

- ☐ Staff, outside your group, who could contribute to your program in assessment, specific curricular areas, experience in teaching certain learner profiles?
- ☐ Equipment available to augment your program (and how access to it might be afforded)?
- ☐ Materials or services developed for other purposes that might be useful for your program (*e.g.*, for addressing specific language needs, child care, or transportation needs)?

Inform your organization. Are you sure that:

- ☐ Others in your organization know about the services you offer and do not turn away the call?
- ☐ Others in the organization know who should receive the call and will transfer the call promptly?
- ☐ The description by your program staff of the services you offer is consistent, professional, and clear?

Train your staff. Are the staff sufficiently:

- ☐ Knowledgeable about your program and organizational capabilities to respond to inquiries productively?
- ☐ Oriented to the workplace to represent the services you offer?
- ☐ Knowledgeable of adult learning issues and implications for learner support in the workplace?
- ☐ Able to recognize basic skills embedded in workplace tasks?

Checklist 3-1 Preparation Before Contacting/Presenting to Potential Client

☐ **Profile client organization**

Products or services, size and scope of business, organizational style, characteristic organization—types of departments, positions; do they have in-house training; if so, what kinds of training do they have?

☐ **Analyze client organizational structure**

Levels of management, governing board, union representation, employees and employee subgroups; what is the profile of employees to be trained?

☐ **Know your audience**

Can this person make ultimate decision, who has to approve the program; how is the training funded and who is involved in the funding decision?

☐ **Identify business or industry trends that call for WPL programs**

Changes in technological, production process, or competition level. What training needs have been addressed, which are likely to arise with industry trends?

☐ **Describe the nature of the problem and how it was identified**

Do they know what the problem is? Is it absenteeism, turnover, productivity or adapting to new technology? Did they assess the problem themselves or is it management judgment? Are they sure about their definition of the problem? Why?

☐ **Identify what you can provide and your qualifications**

Documentation of your general staff qualifications, ability to deliver similar programs, and history or track record relevant to this company.

Checklist 3-2 Outline of Issues to Address in the Initial Presentations

- ☐ What is the nature of the problem to be addressed? How was it discovered? How do perceptions about it differ?

- ☐ How you can provide a program that meets the employer's needs? What are the benefits from the program you offer?

- ☐ How should the WPL program operate?

- ☐ What steps are entailed in implementing the program (for them and for you)?

- ☐ What areas of concerns exist about program implementation and cost? What options exist for mitigating problems?

- ☐ How can the skills acquired during the program be supported? What is involved in assuring the skills acquired transfer to new situations?

Checklist 3-3 Provisional Budget for a LNA Plan

Provider Costs:

- ☐ **Personnel**–Technical and support staff include time for: planning, scheduling, implementing, troubleshooting, documenting, analyzing, meetings and revising report. $ ____
- ☐ **Outside Consultants** (if necessary). $ ____
- ☐ **Printing and Copying**–Preparation, implementation, reporting including development of instrumentation, final instrumentation, documentation, analysis and reporting initial and final findings. $ ____
- ☐ **Supplies and Equipment**–Preparation, implementation, reporting including video or audio tapes, films, slides and transparencies for reporting, computer time, equipment, and mailing expenses. $ ____
- ☐ **Telephone**–Preparation, implementation, reporting $ ____
- ☐ **Travel**–Implementation and reporting including meals and travel for implementation at different client organization sites or across shifts. $ ____
- ☐ **Administration and Overhead** $ ____
- ☐ **Miscellaneous** $ ____

Costs of Needs Analysis for the Provider $_____

Client Costs:

- ☐ **Personnel**–Team rep., supervisor and other staff including time lost from their regular job to participate in LNA: planning, scheduling, troubleshooting, providing data, being interviewed or observed, analyzing findings. $ ____
- ☐ **Printing and Copying**–Preparation, implementation, reporting including additional copying from development of instrumentation, training materials, final instrumentation, documentation, analysis and reporting. $ ____
- ☐ **Facilities and Equipment**—Implementation including any cost from temporary use of facilities and equipment for testing of employee competencies. $ ____
- ☐ **Miscellaneous** $ ____

Costs of Needs Analysis for the Client $_____

Checklist 4-1 Issues to Determine Critical Skills

Issues	Comments
Description of the job tools	
Reference materials and equipment used	
Job performance environment	
Expected outcomes from task and job performance	
Critical job elements or tasks	
Criteria for judging high quality job and task performance	
Specific problems with performance	
Characteristics of less than adequate task performance.	
Workplace conditions affecting quality of task performance	
Discrepancy between employee and supervisor perceptions of high quality task performance	
Discrepancy between employee and supervisor perceptions of the skills needed.	

Checklist 4-2 A LNA Workplan Checklist			
	Date	Task Duration	Staff Responsible
Finalize scope (which workers, which tasks)			
Set goals and priorities including critical tasks to focus LNA			
Collect all relevant job descriptions, tools, and reference materials			
Publicize the purpose of LNA in the company and gain support for participation			
Formulate an appropriate and realistic action plan for implementing LNA			
Review all analysis procedures to assure that the client's needs and legal responsibilities are respected			
Anticipate and identify problems as they arise in implementing the analysis			
Review findings from the LNA and their interpretation			
Make recommendations based on the findings concerning need for a WPL program			
Review the report of LNA before presentation to management			

Checklist 4-3 Interview Guidelines to Establish Literacy Requirements

Before Conducting Interviews Have You:

- ☐ Reviewed job descriptions–for the position under analysis, the next level below it, and the position above it
- ☐ Reviewed job functions–for the position under analysis, the next level below it, and the position above it
- ☐ Reviewed previous training materials–for the position under analysis, the next level below it, and the position above it
- ☐ Reviewed performance standards–for the position under analysis, the next level below it, and the position above it
- ☐ Scheduled interviews of selected employees
- ☐ Structured supervisor interviews for 25 minutes or less
- ☐ Structured employee interviews along with observation of that employee
- ☐ Followed Planning Team procedures

While Conducting Interviews Have You:

- ☐ Interviewed all direct supervisors on targeted job performance
- ☐ Interviewed at least one employee suggested as exemplary in task performance for each supervisor interviewed
- ☐ Interviewed managers if they manage the department in which the job is performed or manage an interdependent department (*i.e.*, either provide materials for use in a targeted task or use results from it)

Checklist 4-4 Guidelines for Task Observation

Before Observation You Should:

- ☐ Select employees to observe based on supervisors' recommendations. Only a sample of employees performing a job need be observed for the purposes of establishing literacy requirements.
- ☐ Schedule observations after some supervisor interviews are completed.
- ☐ Review job descriptions and job function, previous training materials, and performance standards for:
  - o the position under analysis
  - o the next level below it
  - o the level above it
  - o DOT code descriptions of the task

While Conducting Observations You Should:

- ☐ Observe performance of critical tasks and subtasks.
- ☐ Observe over multiple days, if critical tasks are performed periodically or if performance process (input, procedures, or output) varies.
- ☐ Observe and document
  - o what skills are used,
  - o what proficiency levels are required, and
  - o how skills are applied to the tasks.
- ☐ Consider the:
  - o purpose of tasks performed
  - o relation of these tasks to others in the organization

While Recording and Documenting You Should:

- ☐ Document observations to describe:
  - o the tasks and subtasks, comparing actual job function to written job description data,
  - o the skills and skill levels required, and
  - o any barriers you detect to effective use of skills or special conditions effective skill applications have to take into account.
- ☐ Request copies of materials used during the observation

Checklist 4-5 Checklist for Conducting a Literacy Needs Analysis

Preparation–You Should:

- ☐ Develop or adapt a LNA instrument.
- ☐ Pretest it to assure it reflects appropriate
  - o job-related language and style
  - o context in which these skills generally are applied
  - o level of basic skills necessary to do the targeted job well
  - o issues you wish to assess
  - o consideration of workplace needs for an efficient LNA
- ☐ Train and select staff to conduct the LNA
- ☐ Select an appropriate location, following advice of Planning Team
- ☐ Select employees to assess
- ☐ Inform employees and supervisors about LNA, its purposes, its outcomes, how the data will be used, and to whom it is available
- ☐ Schedule the LNA

Assessment–You Should:

- ☐ Explain and administer the LNA to employees
- ☐ Provide feedback to participants about LNA results
- ☐ Solicit reactions to the assessment situation
- ☐ Act on assessment situation feedback as soon as practicable

Documentation–You Should:

- ☐ Score and document LNA findings to allow generalization about
  - o the proportion of employees in a job category needing identified skills
  - o the workplace tasks identified skills relate to
  - o the extent of skills enhancement needed
  - o implications for the overall need for a WPL program
  - o any irregularities in the LNA context that would invalidate the findings

Checklist 4-6 Sample Budget for a WPL Program **Page 1 of 2**

Program Design Phase: During this phase you are refining the program concept, developing actual lessons, developing your MIS, hiring instructors, and orienting staff to the program design and procedures, making final subcontracting arrangements for program support, coordination with the Planning Team.

- Personnel–Program design person, curriculum design person, evaluation design person, support personnel, program manager $_____
- Outside consultants–subcontractor costs for meetings $_____
- Office supplies $_____
- Printing and copying $_____
- Supplies and equipment $_____
- Administration and overhead $_____
- Travel to the workplace for meetings and planning sessions $_____
- Telephone $_____
- Postage $_____
- Miscellaneous $_____

Program Preparation Phase: During this phase you are specifically preparing the materials needed to implement the program for day 1 through the duration of the course. Activities include: Review of materials, gathering materials, obtaining all equipment–such as tape recorders, computers–purchase of supplies needed for learners

- Personnel costs (meetings entailed with specifying and ordering supplies and understanding how to use them) $_____
- Learning supplies (pads, notebook, dividers, pens, disks) $_____
- Instructor supplies (pads, notebook, dividers, pens, disks, records organizer) $_____
- Office supplies $_____
- Equipment costs (including films, videotapes, computers, software, slides, or testing materials $_____
- Other program relevant materials $_____
- Printing and copying $_____
- Telephone $_____
- Postage $_____
- Local travel to obtain supplies $_____
- Miscellaneous $_____
- Administration and overhead $_____

Continued on next page

Checklist 4-6 Sample Budget for a WPL Program **Page 2 of 2**

Program Delivery: In this phase classes are offered, the program is monitored, staff is being trained, Team meetings are held, and support services are made available.

- Personnel costs–instructors, instructional support, coordinator, evaluator, program support such as counseling, office support $_____
- Participant costs–salaries, expenses, replacement, incentives $_____
- Outside consultants $_____
- Material costs (consumable, not included above) $_____
- Facilities costs $_____
- Equipment costs (if not purchased or included in previous section) $_____
- Travel to site $_____
- Telephone, postage $_____
- Miscellaneous $_____
- Administration and overhead $_____

Program Evaluation: These costs are the implementation and write-up of the evaluation. The design costs of the evaluation are included already under program design.

- Personnel–site visit time, analysis time, report time, travel to meetings, support personnel $_____
- Program staff time for meeting with evaluation personnel $_____
- Printing and copying $_____
- Office supplies $_____
- Outside consultants $_____
- Travel to sites $_____
- Telephone, postage $_____
- Miscellaneous $_____

Report Presentation and Close-out: These costs reflect the work with the Planning Team post program to evaluate the program and using the findings to improve the program and your capacity for delivering a quality program.

- Personnel–final instructional staff meetings, Team meetings, meetings with other workplace staff and subcontractors, and revising MIS $_____
- Office supplies $_____
- Printing and copying, making overheads $_____
- Telephone $_____
- Postage $_____

Total: (Pages 1 and 2) $_____

Checklist 6-1 Space Selection Criteria

- ☐ **Self-Containment:** buffered from disruption due to pass-through, foot traffic or machinery noise
- ☐ **Size:** adequate space for the learners and equipment, assuring no more than two learners to a computer
- ☐ **Neutrality:** a location that doesn't stigmatize participation
- ☐ **Lighting:** lighting sufficient for adults working on the type of tasks and equipment included in the curriculum
- ☐ **Temperature:** sufficiently comfortable to encourage participation in instruction, using the specific curricula and equipment intended
- ☐ **Electrical:** access to appropriate outlets for equipment
- ☐ **Seating:** comfortable and suitable seating
- ☐ **Work Surfaces:** appropriate for individual, small or large groups, and work with specific equipment for the curriculum
- ☐ **Continuity:** space that is continuously available, reducing participation problems and reinforcing class identity
- ☐ **Amenities:** relatively near bathrooms, phone, and provides the equipment necessary such as black boards or flip charts

Checklist 6-2 Categories of WPL Materials and Supplies to Consider

- ☐ **Group-Writing Surface:** a white board, flip chart, blackboard, or other things for the purpose of making individual writing accessible to the group; and appropriate writing and erasing implements.
- ☐ **Library:** dictionaries, trade journals, job-related manuals and materials that learners can use to assist in their tasks.
- ☐ **Lesson Support Materials:** samples of work products, forms, or supplies relevant to a particular discussion; pictures of tools, machines, physical space or people working at the tasks focused upon in this workplace; generic pictures of people at work in similar professions performing different task functions.
- ☐ **Administrative and Learning Support:** folders, notebooks, paper, pens, pencils for participants and instructional team, photocopies of materials.
- ☐ **Technology:** computer and printer equipment, videotape recorder and player, interactive multi-media, audio tape recorders and playback, as needed for curriculum objectives and learners' tasks.
- ☐ **Technology Peripherals:** earphones, speech synthesizers and the devices that permit synchronizing tape recording with computer programs, and blank tapes or computer disks as required.
- ☐ **Interpersonal Communication Mechanisms:** telephone listings or electronic mail through which participants can ask questions, communicate with instructors, or find out about changes in class location in advance.
- ☐ **Materials Storage and Transportation Aids:** bookshelves, file cabinets or other vehicles for storing class materials and supplies between sessions; and carts for moving materials and supplies between classes.

Checklist 6-3 Implementation Check List **Page 1 of 2**

Are Program Goals and Objectives:

- ☐ Articulated, both instrumental and overall goals?
- ☐ Linked to expected learner competencies?

Are Staff Oriented to and Able to Work with:

- ☐ Workplace values, needs and concerns?
- ☐ Program participants' needs and concerns?
- ☐ Program goals, and objectives?
- ☐ Their responsibilities?
- ☐ Others' roles and responsibilities in the program?
- ☐ Program guidelines and procedures?
- ☐ Criteria for performance evaluation?
- ☐ Curriculum objectives, instructional activities, materials and equipment?
- ☐ Resources available to help them with their work?

Does Scheduling Take into Account:

- ☐ Workplace needs and culture?
- ☐ Barriers to program participation?
- ☐ Time needed to develop specific targeted skills?
- ☐ Logistical concerns and training needs of instructional team?
- ☐ The profile of learners in the program?
- ☐ The nature of the curriculum and intended outcomes?
- ☐ The time needed for learner assessment and evaluation?

Continued on next page

Checklist 6-3 Implementation Check List **Page 2 of 2**

Does the Selection of Meeting Space:

- ☐ Facilitate learning activities?
- ☐ Encourage program participation?
- ☐ Provide program continuity?
- ☐ Allow use of appropriate instructional technology?

Do Materials, Supplies and Equipment:

- ☐ Suit the workplace context?
- ☐ Build job-related competencies?
- ☐ Facilitate development of requisite cognitive skills?
- ☐ Encourage curiosity, problem-solving, self-directed learning and other metacognitive skills?

Program Monitoring and Documentation

- ☐ Does program documentation assist in:
  - o Identifying program strengths and weaknesses?
  - o Suggesting needed program expertise and resources?
  - o Setting priorities for addressing problems identified?
- ☐ Are stakeholders and the Planning Team:
  - o Aware of program progress and activities?
  - o Providing feedback about program concerns?
  - o Assisting in troubleshooting?
- ☐ Is program organization and management supportive of successful program implementation?

Checklist 7-1 Components of an Evaluation Strategy

Issues: Determine what issues to examine

- ☐ Develop evaluation questions
- ☐ Identify data needed to address questions
- ☐ Discuss evaluation focus, data needs, and procedures with Team

Methods: Determine the appropriate evaluation method

- ☐ Identify issues each interviewee/respondent should be asked about
- ☐ Identify types of information they can provide
- ☐ Identify methods suitable for each participant and issue
- ☐ Develop data collection forms or instruments, as needed
- ☐ Specify criteria for data collection to yield reliable, valid and useful data
- ☐ Specify frequency for data collection to make evaluation data timely
- ☐ Identify benefits and burden for participants in the evaluation

Administrative Procedures: Develop an evaluation plan

- ☐ Specify roles, responsibilities, tasks and schedule for data collection
- ☐ Specify data handling procedures ensuring confidentiality and quality

Analysis: Determine analyses to be conducted

- ☐ Identify analyses to use to address evaluation questions and concerns
- ☐ Specify data needed to conduct these analyses
- ☐ Specify how analyses will be reported and their utility for stakeholders

Findings: Determine how findings will be made available and used

- ☐ Discuss how findings will be shared within and outside of the company.
- ☐ Distribute, discuss and use the findings as relevant.

Checklist 7-2 The Five Primary Evaluation Areas

Stated Program Goals and Objectives

- ☐ Were the stated goals and objectives achieved?
- ☐ Did the achieved goals result in improved job performance?
- ☐ Were program goals appropriate, in hindsight?
- ☐ What goals and objectives are implied for a future program?

Program Participants

- ☐ What affected program implementation and outcomes?
- ☐ Did subgroups of participants gain more than others?
- ☐ What sub-group characteristics affect participation and outcomes?

Program Organization and Resources

- ☐ Did program management and resources facilitate program effectiveness?
- ☐ Were resources used efficiently?
- ☐ To what extent did program structure contribute to quality?
- ☐ Were the anticipated resources made available as planned?
- ☐ What additional resources were needed (if any)?
- ☐ How did physical context (facilities) affect program outcomes?

Program Implementation

- ☐ Was the program organized and implemented as planned?
- ☐ Were staff adequately trained to implement the program?
- ☐ Was the planned curriculum implemented?
- ☐ Were the planned materials, equipment, and resources used?
- ☐ What sorts of learning experiences were provided?
- ☐ What sort of learning support was provided?
- ☐ Did program implementation reflect workplace priorities?

Program Outcomes

- ☐ Did participants find the program worthwhile?
- ☐ Do program outcomes have an impact on targeted job performance–productivity and bottom-line issues?
- ☐ Are program outcomes perceived by the range of stakeholders?
- ☐ Will program outcomes transfer to new task and job requirements?
- ☐ What additional training needs have become evident from the program?
- ☐ Are program achievements useful and relevant for the workplace?
- ☐ What are the implications from program achievements?

Checklist 7-3 Procedures for Developing a Structured Interview

- ☐ An agenda or protocol to use for answering evaluation questions has been developed separately for each respondent group.
- ☐ The order, wording and format for recording answers from each question have been examined to assure objectivity, reliability, and validity of the data collected.
- ☐ Information required from all respondent stakeholder representatives has been identified, and comparability of data collected across participants examined.
- ☐ Need for each question, how the data will be used by itself, or in combination with other data, to answer the questions has been examined. Only those questions relevant to the program as implemented on site should be asked.
- ☐ Procedure for collecting, assuring accurate recording of information, and handling collected data has been developed, which respects need for confidentiality and data integrity.
- ☐ Protocols, interview procedures and scheduling have been discussed with the Planning Team as part of the evaluation design.

Checklist 7-4 Procedures for Conducting Observation

- ☐ Evaluation questions to be addressed with data from observations are clear.
- ☐ An observation form has been developed based on the evaluation questions.
- ☐ Need for data on each issue, how the data will be used alone or in combination with other data to answer the questions has been developed.
- ☐ Protocols, observation procedures and scheduling have been discussed with the Planning Team as part of the evaluation design.

Checklist 7-5 Procedures for Reviewing Program Records

- ☐ Evaluation questions to be addressed with program records have been identified.
- ☐ A records analysis form has been developed based on the evaluation questions.
- ☐ Need for data on each issue, how the data will be used by itself, or with other data, to answer the questions has been specified.
- ☐ Procedures for obtaining the information, if not recorded, and handling collected data have been developed, with respect for confidentiality and data integrity.

Appendix B

B-1 Information for a Quick WPL Needs Scan

Primary Sources:

- Chamber of Commerce: Directories with types/size of businesses
- Private Industry Council: Community Labor Market Analysis (Types of employers' needs served, skill levels of workers, etc.)
- American Society for Training and Development: Businesses with training departments
- Employers within the Community and Business Associations
- Labor Organizations

Secondary Sources:

- Local Area Council of Governments: Types of businesses expressing needs and types of needs
- Service provider networks: Learning networks, library, literacy councils, Ed>Net[1], literacy campaigns, OTAN[2]
- Service providers in area: Adult schools, community colleges, Volunteers of America, local libraries
- Phone book: Other private service providers
- Business Library: Newspaper, annual reports, business journals
- Obtain and review community WPL needs information
- Answer central questions

Two sources of local labor market information are noteworthy. First, the Employment Data and Research Division of the Employment Development Department **(EDD)** works with communities through its "State-Local Labor Market Project" to collect and analyze data.[3] Current information and reports can be obtained from EDD. Second, the California Occupational Information Coordinating Committee **(COICC)** provides handbooks and other resources to collect and analyze labor market information.[4]

B-2 Examples of a Quick WPL Needs Scan

The information you use for a quick scan of workplace needs will vary based on resources and the kind of information you need. Some types and sources of information are listed below:

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[1] Community College service clearing house.

[2] Outreach and Technical Assistance Network which has bibliographic material on WPL programs available

[3] **State-Local Labor Market Information, Technical Guide**, Employment Data and Research Division, Employment Development Department, Sacramento , May 1987. The specific number for these reports is (916) 427-4965.

[4] **How to Develop and Use Labor Market Information in Local Occupational Program Planning**, California Occupational Information Coordinating Committee, Sacramento, December 1982. For further information about COICC resources call (916) 323-6544.

- Businesses in the area:
  - Business Associations, Chamber of Commerce
  - Local Area Council of Governments
  - Yellow Pages
  - Business Library: Newspaper, Annual reports, Business journals
  - Labor organizations
- Providers of WPL services, or sources of information about it:
  - Adult schools in your area
  - California Literacy Inc
  - Community Colleges in your area; Ed>Net
  - Labor organizations
  - Library
  - Literacy councils and campaigns
  - Outreach and Technical Assistance Network **(OTAN)**
  - Telephone book listings of organizations and consultants
  - Volunteer literacy organizations
- Workplace needs currently being served:
  - Private Industry Councils' Community Labor Market Analysis
  - Conversations with employers, including businesses with training departments
  - Business Association representatives, newsletters, or journals.
  - U.S. Government reports on business needs, such as SCANS. See the references for this manual.
- General labor market descriptive information
  - EDD, Employment Data and Research Division, State-Local Labor Market Project, (916) 427-4965.
  - California Occupational Information Coordinating Committee provides handbooks to assist local agencies to collect and analyze local labor market information; (916) 323-6544.

Sample Results from the WPL Needs Scan

WPL Needs Scan Finding:	Conclusions about WPL Needs:
High proportion of immigrant workers in entry level positions	ESL components
Industry implementing new types of technology	Need for basic skills, applied math, problem-solving, and communication skills; and occupation-specific content in program
Many small service businesses	Joint program development possibilities for subsidizing a WPL program
Dead-end jobs with high turnover rates	Address ways to secure WPL program investment in discussions with employers
Rapidly increasing demand for WPL programs, but probable market saturation within two years	Establish limits for investment in program development
High level of concern about coordinating WPL program scheduling	Designate program coordinator and market availability of flexible scheduling
High level of competition in meeting high profile WPL needs	Coordinate with other services providers.

Appendix C

C-1 Response to Request for Proposals for WPL Programs

Sometimes companies will issue a request for potential providers of WPL services to submit a formal proposal to initiate a WPL program at their site. The following is a sample RFP (request for proposal) and a format for delivering response to it.[5]

Client Requirements Should Indicate

- **Sponsors and Goals.** Stakeholder identities, such as name of company and union. Overall goal, such as increase in job-related literacy and job performance
- **Timeframe for the training**. Duration of training (*e.g.* year round); module size (*e.g.* 40 hour units for a duration of 10 weeks each).
- **Anticipated number of employees to participate and qualifications for enrollment**. Total number of workers employed, number of participants to begin program, and total number of workers to be involved in it. Requirements for participation (*e.g.* voluntary for anyone who chooses to participate).
- **Conditions that may require special consideration**. Any conditions that may affect participation or scheduling or outcomes. For example, length of shift, number of times per week participants expected to attend, availability of make-up classes; whether participants will be attending on their own time; if special provisions for childcare or transportation may be necessary.
- **Major requirements**. Expected program hallmarks, such as location of training, scheduling and duration of program for individual participant, participant motivation, and curriculum orientation to workplace needs and priorities.

Provider Response Should Indicate the

- **Background of your organization**. History and mission; experience with populations like the client's; capacity to provide a WPL program, including the literacy needs analyses, design of a WPL curriculum and materials, instruction, and evaluation of the program and learners' progress; the resources your organization is able to provide to respond to individual employee needs.

[5] It is adapted from Philippi, Jorie W., "Sample Requests for Proposals," in Carnevale, Anthony, Gainer, Leila and A. Meltzer, *Workplace Basics Training Manual*, pp. D.1-D.3, San Francisco, CA: Jossey-Bass, 1990.

- **Training services to be provided**. These include intended instructional approach, rationale for it, proposed curriculum materials and reasons for using them, activities entailed, computers and other equipment to be used. Others include assessment techniques and instruments and how they will be used to further recruitment goals and program activities

- **Measuring learner progress, monitoring and documenting program effectiveness**. Describe procedures and techniques to be used, who will do it, how often it will be done, and how the results from it can and will be used.

- **Staffing and program management**. Names of key staff, procedures for selecting staff and for maintaining program quality

- **Estimated program cost.** Rationale and budget indicating a breakdown of program costs by category (salaries, equipment, other costs, and administrative overhead), and indicating both total program cost and cost by program module (*e.g.* class cycle over some period of time or for the first year or however you have structured a learning period).

- **Benefits to the company.** Salient benefits to the company from your strategy to address key WPL program requirements and components.

C-2 Marketing and Public Relations Materials

You should always bring something descriptive about your program that potential clients can keep. A brochure is an example of such a material. It includes five types of information in language which is as brief, simple, and communicative as possible. These types of information are:

[1] **Statement of why a client would want a WPL program.** This statement addresses the question of how a client can notice that a problem exists, and how a client can tell if the problem is sufficiently extensive to warrant instituting a WPL program. You may want to include here common indicators of workplace problems (how do you know when a person cannot read sufficiently well); what happens when workers have limited language skills and communication is a key constituent of productivity. These indicators of need can be developed either from your Quick WPL need scan or from the literature about WPL needs. Common issues are: training and technology either of which is not implemented as well as anticipated; equipment upgrade or change in job-skill requirements; downsizing requiring more efficient use of basic skills; safety or accident prevention issues; and changes in the workforce.

[2] **Statement of services.** Identify the WPL program activities that constitute a high quality WPL program. They should convey a positive contribution and pay-off for the employer. They are the program elements which underline that you will center the program specifically on addressing their workplace need and that you have staff trained to implement the program effectively and efficiently. Remember to focus the client on specific job tasks or departments

which may be affected by a program. Commonly cited issues are: analyzing literacy needs related to specific job tasks and competency levels, customizing a curriculum approach to address work-related problems, assisting employees develop basic skills and apply them appropriately to work settings, and pre-post assessment of both skill attainment and program effectiveness.

[3] **Statement of benefits from the services.** This information responds to the basic issues of clients: How will I know that the program works and what will be the outcomes from the program? In a sense this is a restatement of the program need. However, it enlarges the statement to a long-term vision of the effective workplace. Commonly cited issues are: improved productivity, quality, efficiency, effectiveness, enhanced employee skill flexibility, and improved ability to respond to company training.

[4] **The identity of your organization.** This information is a quick reminder of who you are and your linkage to other providers. It may be just your name, address, and phone number. It may include a logo or phrase which serves to identify your organization and its orientation. Some organizations have used phrases such as "Serving the Business Community" (on the brochure from North Orange County Community College District). Others have highlighted quotes that summed up the problem and their orientation to it. The general rule here is that the name of your organization and phone number should be repeated on every page of the paper.

[5] **Contact person.** This information is a quick reminder of whom they talked with and how they obtained the brochure.

Specific brochures are not included. The decisions you make in developing one will balance cost and resources (both time and money). The best brochures are not necessarily the most expensive; rather, the best are simple, convey the information you want, and are delivered to people who can use them. Three rules of thumb apply to developing brochures which are used and useful. These concern presentation, rather than actual content.

[1] **Pleasing to the eye and feel.** The colors used and the amount of white space on the page; size of the brochure, weight of paper used, and other design issues contribute to the presentation.

[2] **Simple and clear presentation.** Thoughtful layout of the information and its organization. The reader should be able to follow your presentation easily and be able to locate and return to portions of the brochure which are of particular interest.

[3] **Meaningful to the reader.** The language of the brochure. The person who receives the brochure should be able to apply it to his or her organization; it should be in terms meaningful to the intended recipient of the brochure.

Appendix D

D-1 Initial Contact with Potential Clients

Initial Interview Agenda Form[6]

Date: _____
Name of Company:_____
Name of Contact:_____
Title: _____
How long with firm? In position_____
Department or Subgroup:_____

1. Describe primary product or service:

2. Describe the company :

   _____ Subsidiary (Type)
   _____ Number of year-round employees
   _____ Number of employee shifts per day
   _____ Total number of sites in California
   _____ Number of sites requiring training

3. Types of tasks or positions within company workforce:

4. What training needs do you feel you need (basic skills, technical, supervision, other)? *Need (Position within company), who has it?*

5. How would you describe the employees to be trained (in terms of educational level, age range, ethnic background, language proficiency, length of time with the company, or other factors)?

6. Have you experienced difficulty filling positions, or with turnover among staff in that (or a) position?

[6] Adapted from "Workplace Learning Resources Diagnostic Interview with Company," developed by The Economic Development Network of the California Community Colleges (ED>Net)

7. What objectives do you want to accomplish with the training?

8. How did you determine your training needs? Do you have a training department? What situations lead you to consider training?

9. Are you anticipating any changes that will impact on skills your employees need? What future skills will your employees need?

10. What steps have you taken to address basic skill problems identified?

11. What would be indicators of a successful WPL program in this/these areas? How will we measure the transfer of the skills back at the job?

12. What performance incentives or recognition is used, and will any be available to facilitate WPL program participation? (performance linked to promotion or pay, released time during work, other)

13 When would training best occur to fit in with your organization's schedule?

Time(s) of class sessions:

Morning (AM): 1 2 3 4 5 6 7 8 9 10 11 12 Noon

Afternoon (PM): 1 2 3 4 5 6 7 8 9 10 11 12 Midnight

Day of Week: M T W Th F Sa Su

Intensiveness (C heck One):

[ ] Intensive Block (Approximately 1 Week of Straight Training)

[ ] 3 to 4 hours a week (2 Sessions Per Week for More Than 1 Week)

14. Could we have a sample of the written materials that are required for the job?

D-2

Responsibilities in a WPL Program Contract

Sample chart allocating responsibilities for tasks entailed with conducting one WPL program

Responsibility	**Allocation***
Literacy needs analysis	Joint:Provider as lead
Curriculum design	Provider
Customizing	Joint:Provider as lead
Printing costs	Either
Learner testing: materials and evaluation	Provider
Class materials	Provider
Instructors: criteria, job descriptions, orientation	Provider
Classroom space	Client
Liaison between partners	Both
Learner recruitment: criteria and activities	Joint with Client as lead
Class scheduling and learner placement	Provider
Release time to attend class	Client
Other employee incentives for participation and performance	Client, primarily; Both
Program marketing -- internal and external	Both
Awards/certificates	Both
Evaluation	Both

*Terms:

Joint Task requires provider and client working together, but lead responsibility allocated

Provider Task primary responsibility of provider

Client Task primary responsibility of client management or Planning Team

Either Either provider or client has responsibility–should be allocated

Both Task has separate provider and client components– *e.g.*, both should have liaison representatives

D-3

Planning Team Meeting Agenda–First Meeting

An agenda should be developed for every Planning Team Meeting. A sample agenda for a Planning Team Meeting includes the topics listed below.

PLANNING TEAM MEETING #1
September 23, 1993, 10:00 AM to 11:00 AM
Sierra Environments, 2234 Hale Drive

I **Review Meeting Objectives**
- Review agenda and add additional issues as needed
- Overview of the Training Plan for the Client

II **Review Objectives and Responsibilities of Planning Team**
- Overview of Team's role in achieving training objectives
- Flow chart of Team activities, expected contribution of the Team in leading to training outcomes

III **Discuss Next Steps and Sensitive Issues**
- Identify training implementation strategies
- Discuss sensitive implementation issues for client and employees–employee assessment and recruitment
- Discuss how to handle these issues

IV **Logistics for Next Steps**
- Identify activities for accomplishing next steps
- Determine timeline for activities, the resources needed, and the involvement of the Team in providing resources

V **Assignments for Next Meeting**
- Identify tasks, deadlines, and person responsible *e.g.*, selection of 2-3 employees to participate in the Planning Team and selection of employees for sample assessment.

VI **Next meeting date and additional questions**
- Schedule next meeting
- Objectives of the meeting

Appendix D-3 Continued Next Page:

Key Questions to Be Addressed

Typical questions that arise in the first meeting include the following issues. If they do not arise, you may want to raise some or all of them.

The Overall WPL Program

- What benefit to client and workers from participation?
- What specific English and basic skills are required at site?
- How will we know if the program worked?

Program Implementation

- What incentives/rewards are in place for worker participation?
- How can we minimize impact on the workplace—*e.g.* how many people can be away from their work, in order to participate in the program, at the same time?
- What criteria will be used for recruiting and selecting program participants? Who will identify potential participants? Will participation be voluntary? How will participation be monitored?
- How should the program be publicized in the client's company? Who will publicize it? Also, is it advisable to have a motivational presentation by a manager for the first day of class? Of what sort?
- What type of space is required, with what equipment or supplies? How will these be arranged?

Planning Team and Client Involvement in the Program

- What sort of involvement will managers and supervisors have in the program after it starts? How can they show their support? How can problems they find be conveyed?
- Who will act as liaison to the education provider? What responsibilities will this person have–scheduling rooms for assessment and for class meetings, scheduling appointments with worksite managers, supervisors and employees?
- How will program completers be recognized–staff meeting, certificate of completion, recognition breakfast?

Program Outcomes

- Who will evaluate the program? On what bases?
- Who has access to findings on individual participants'?
- How will the program be publicized inside and outside the company? Who will have access to the data on outcomes?

Appendix E

E-1 Sample Analysis of WPL Requirements

This section illustrates findings from analysis of literacy requirements entailed with the position of Maintenance Worker 1. It is fictional, compiling features from several task analyses. Methods used were a survey completed by managers, supervisors, and employees occupying that role, concerning the nature of the job, its function for the company, and the skills entailed with it. Literacy requirements were presented in a list in the survey, and respondents were asked to rank the top 5 skill and training needs (if any). The scale to use in gauging needs for these skills also was in the survey, with 1 as low and 5 as high on the scale. The resulting job profile is presented in **Exhibit E1.1**.

Based on findings from these activities, criteria for facilitating more effective performance are identified, and implications drawn about literacy requirements. The literacy requirements identified and the conclusions drawn should be confirmed with a subset of the supervisors and employees interviewed and presented to the Planning Team.

Determining the literacy requirements for doing a job well is only part of the task, however. The other part is determining whether employees have the requisite competencies. Procedures for accomplishing this are discussed in the next section.

Exhibit E1.1:
Analysis of Literacy Requirements Maintenance Worker 1: Sample

Position Description:

a. 85 individuals fill this position; all are full time, permanent.

b. List the entry position into a ladder of four hierarchical positions.

c. Key qualifications for the position are:

- Ability to be bonded
- Building maintenance experience,
- Familiarity with solvents
- Machine maintenance experience

d. Promotion is contingent on job performance and seniority.

e. Annual rate of turnover (not including promotion) for this position is 45%, compared to an organization average rate of 18%; and an average rate of 25% for other entry positions.

f. Accident, insurance and workers' comp claims affect 8% of employees for this position compared to 4% for the organization as a whole.

g. 22% are 20-35 years old; 35% are 36-45 years old; 35% are 46-59 years old; and 8% are 60-67 years old.

h. 43% are Hispanic; 22% are Asian; 15% are African American and 20% are Other White.

Exhibit E1.1, Continued Next Page:

Exhibit E1.1, Continued:
Analysis of Literacy Requirements Maintenance Worker 1: Sample

Goal: Depict literacy needs of Maintenance Worker 1

a Address issues of safety and accidents
b. Address issues of turnover
c. Address issues of individual employee productivity

Job Tasks and Duties (See Formal Job Description * = Critical Task)

*a. Respond to specific requests for repair
*b. Estimate type of repair required
*c. Perform routine inspections, and schedule routine maintenance work
*d. Perform routine maintenance work
*e. Monitor and report on condition and safety of work environment

Methods Used in Analysis:

* Observed 12 employees during an entire shift, 3 each in the 4 sites where they work (see Appendix D for sample)
* Interviewed 22 people about job performance criteria. These included 4 building managers, 4 shift foremen, the 12 employees observed, the Facilities Manager and the Operations Manager
* Reviewed the following materials:
  Job description for the full range of maintenance positions
  Activities reporting forms and actual reports
  Requisition form and actual completed requisitions
  Problem report forms and actual reports
  Job evaluation forms and actual evaluations (see Appendix D for sample)

Findings: The following were reported or observed as key literacy skills entailed in job and training needs

Key Literacy Skills for Critical Tasks	% Subtasks Requiring Proficiency Level	
*Read and use information		
[a] Technical label information	65% High	35% Moderate
[b] Machine manuals	95% High	5% Moderate
[c] Memoranda from others	55% High	20% Moderate
*Write technical:		
[a] Memoranda	65% High	35% Moderate
[b] Accident condition reports	97% High	3% Moderate
*Math:		
[a] Recognize numbers	97% High	3% Moderate
[b] Compute proportions	68% High	32% Moderate
[c] Add hours	22% High	32% Moderate
*Problem solving and communication:		
[a] Estimate nature of repair	48% High	22% Moderate
[b] Listen and communicate	72% High	25% Moderate

E-2

Proposal Outline for a WPL Program

i. Acknowledgments

ii. Executive Summary

I. Project Overview

- A. Project background
- B. Project objectives
- C. Workplace concerns addressed

II. Project Methods

- A. Identification and selection of participants
- B. Development of assessment instrumentation
- C. Description of the data collection process

III. Project Findings, skill requirements entailed

- A. Overall
- B. By job, referencing tasks
- C. Given anticipated changes in work structure

IV. Workplace Needs, skill proficiency needs

- A. Overall
- B. By job, referencing tasks
- C. Given anticipated changes in work structure

V. Summary of Findings: Literacy Impact on this Workplace

- A. Potential usefulness of a WPL program
- B. Focus of a WPL program, placement levels within it,
- C. Length of training time entailed,
- D. Likely results and benefits *vs.* risks and problems

VI. Recommendations

VII. Appendices

- A. Instrumentation
- B. Data Summary

Appendix F

F-1

An Example of Basic Skills for the Workplace

This is not a curriculum. It is an example of how one program conceptualized the basic skills implicit in work materials and tasks of an occupation. In this list, reading and writing precede listening and speaking. This was done to show that reading and writing instruction can contribute to the development of spoken language communication at work. In a WPL program curriculum these skills would be incorporated in job-related tasks and the tasks organized following workplace priorities. In the curriculum format, some of these skills would be taught at the same time, according to the requirements job tasks imposed.

Language

Occupational vocabulary: (General, technical, and conceptual terms).

1. Identify words in context.
2. Recognize meaning of terms
3. Identify abbreviations and symbols
4. Identify sound patterns in words.
5. Identify roots, prefixes, suffixes.
6. Recognize spelling differences between words.

Reading: (Text formats: passages containing occupational content: rules, instructions, procedures, checklist, case studies, memos, letters, bulletins, brochures, newsletters, catalogs, manuals, textbooks, tests, reports, legal documents; non-text formats: tables, charts, graphs, diagrams, illustrations)

A. General Reading Skills
   1. Recognize main idea and details.
   2. Recognize idea relationships (sequence, comparison, causation).
   3. Recognize purpose, parts, and reading strategies associated with various formats.
   4. Transform and infer information (paraphrase, classify, conclude, summarize).
   5. Recognize errors or inconsistencies in presented information.
   6. Recognize comprehension problem, source, and reason.

B. Occupation Specific Applications
   1. Determine topic or gist of material.
   2. Locate individual facts or specifications in text.
   3. Follow detailed directions to complete a task.
   4. Follow sequenced illustrations to complete a task.

5. Locate page, title, paragraph, figure, or chart needed to answer a question or solve a problem.
6. Use skimming or scanning to determine if text contains relevant information.
7. Cross-reference information in tables or charts.
8. Apply information to locate malfunctions or decide on a course of action.

Writing

A. Recording (Occupational forms)
   1. Copy words of codes from one document to another.
   2. Place routing identification information on forms (names, addresses, dates, times).

B. Routine notes and messages (Phone messages, informal notes, brief memos)
   1. Legibly record spoken statements.
   2. Complete standard forms.
   3. Communicate routine information (descriptions, directions, requests, replies).

C. Storing, retrieving, and organizing (Labels, lists, notes, outlines, diagrams)
   1. Use labels to tag information for later use.
   2. Use lists and notes to store and retrieve information.
   3. Use outlines and diagrams to plan, remember, and organize information and actions.

D. Authoring (Formal messages, memos, letters, reports)
   1. Decide on subject, purpose, audience, and format.
   2. Limit subject: focus according to purpose, audience and format.
   3. Organize information into paragraphs and sentences.
   4. Review and edit for completeness, clarity, paragraph development, sentence grammar, and punctuation.

Listening: (Directions, conversations, conferences, meetings)

A. Verbal and non-verbal information
   1. Follow spoken directions.
   2. Extract information from extended message.
   3. Follow line of thought as it develops among several speakers.
   4. Place information in the "big picture."
   5. Recognize non-verbal information (tone, gesture, attentiveness).

B. Analysis and evaluation
   1. Recognize shifts in communication purpose.
   2. Determine underlying assumptions and biases.
   3. Evaluate message in terms of credibility, usefulness, and appropriateness.

Speaking

A. Workplace communication (Message, requests, reminders, instruction, warnings, greetings, personal expressions)
   1. State information concisely and efficiently.
   2. Check that message has been understood.
   3. Display responsive and appropriate language behavior.

B. Public contact (Phone, face-to-face)
   1. Use question and answer format to establish and meet need.
   2. Provide accurate and adequate information and referral.
   3. Keep up company's positive image.

C. Problem solving, decision making, planning
   1. Contribute information in keeping with general topic.
   2. Express opinions and judgments (use feelings, logic, aesthetics, ethics, or experience).
   3. Develop and evaluate ideas (use analogy, generalize, hypothesize, explore implications, suggest alternatives).
   4. Support group process.

Math

Numbers

A. Whole Numbers
   1. Recognize use (counting, ranking, identifying) of numbers.
   2. Read, write and count numbers.
   3. Add, subtract, multiply, and divide.
   4. Solve occupational word problems.

B. Fractions
   1. Recognize concept of fractions.
   2. Read and write fractions.
   3. Add, subtract, multiply, and divide.
   4. Solve occupational word problems.

C. Decimals
   1. Recognize concept of percent.
   2. Read and write decimals.
   3. Compute using money.
   4. Round off decimals.
   5. Add, subtract, multiply, and divide.
   6. Solve occupational word problems.

D. Percent
   1. Recognize concept of percent.
   2. Read and write percents.
   3. Compute using percent.

E. Conversions
   1. Relate fractions, decimals, and percents.
   2. Convert from one to another.

F. Mixed Operations (multi-step problems)
   1. Solve occupational work problems using more than one operation.
   2. Compute averages.

Measurement

A. English and Metric systems
   1. Read and write measures.
   2. Use device to measure.
   3. Convert English to Metric and/or Metric to English.
   4. Convert from one unit to another within a single system.

B. Time
   1. Read and tell time (traditional and digital).
   2. Read 24-hour clock.

C. Calculator
   1. Recognize functions.
   2. Use calculators to solve occupational problems.

Estimation

1. Recognize concept of estimation.
2. Estimate measurement (length, angle, capacity).
3. Compute using estimation (rounding).
4. Determine reasonableness of results using estimation.

Algebra

1. Find an unknown value using a formula.
2. Identify appropriate formula.

Geometry (Shapes and Angles)

1. Recognize concepts of parallel, perpendicular, triangle, rectangle, square, and circle.
2. Recognize and name shapes.

Statistics[7]

1. Collect and organize data into tables, charts, graphs, and maps.
2. Use coordinate systems (tables, charts, graphs, and maps).
3. Use simple statistics in decision-making.
   a. average (mean, central tendency)
   b. spread (range, dispersion)

[7] These items are taken from Drew, R.A. & Mikulecky, L. Appendix A. ***How to Gather and Develop Job Specific Literacy Materials for Basic Skills Instruction***, School of Education, Bloomington, Indiana.

F-2

Product Review Format

When designing your curriculum, review a wide range before deciding the appropriate approaches and materials for your class(es). Materials you consider may include electronic technology-based materials as well as print-based materials. A sample product review form[8] is provided below.

(1) Product Name: _____

(2) Vendor Name: _____

(3) Cost:$ _____ (total or per student or per class)

(4) Publication Date or Version Number: _____

(5) Current User's Experiences:

Current Users	Contact, Phone Number	Context of Use (Comments about Use)

(6) Focus of Product:

[ ] Learner Assessment
[ ] Instruction
[ ] Program Management
[ ] Workplace LNA
[ ] Program Development
[ ] Learner Portfolio Management

(7) Description of Product: Purpose and Suggested Use:

_____

_____

What support is necessary to use it (other materials, training, equipment)?

_____

_____

(8) Conclusions about usefulness and function:

_____

[8] Adapted from a form provided by the Workplace Learning Resource Center Committee

F-3 Partial Listing of Literacy Resources

AFL-CIO
Education Department
315 16th Street, N.W.
Washington, D.C. 20036

American Association of Adult and Continuing Education (AAACE)
1201 16th Street, N.W., Suite 230
Washington, D.C. 20036

American Association of Community and Junior Colleges (AACJC)
One DuPont Circle, Suite 410
Washington, D.C. 20036
(202) 293-2000

American Council of Life Insurance (ACLI)
1001 Pennsylvania Avenue, N.W, Suite 500
Washington D.C. 20004-2599
(202) 624-1000

American Newspaper Publishers Association (ANPA)
Post Office Box 17407
Dulles International Airport
Washington, D.C. 20041
(703) 683- 3111

American Society for Training and Development (ASTD)
1630 Duke Street
Box 1443
Alexandria, VA 22314

Assault on Illiteracy Program (AOIP)
410 Central Park West. PH-C
New York, NY 10025

Association for Community-Based Education (ACBE)
1806 Vernon Street, N.W.
Washington, D.C. 20009
(209) 462-6333

Association for Florida Laubach Organizations (AFLO)
C/O North Miami Public Library
835 N.E. 132 Street
Miami, FL 33161
(305) 891-5535

Business Council for Effective Literacy (BCEL)
1221 Avenue of the Americas, 35th Floor
New York, NY 10020
(212) 512-2415

California Department of Education
Adult Education and Job Training Unit
560 J Street
Sacramento, CA 95814
(916) 323-2570

California Literacy, Inc.
339 South Mission
San Gabriel, CA 91776
(818) 282-0134

California State Library
P.O. Box 942837
Sacramento, CA 95814

Chancellor's Office
California Community Colleges
1107 9th Street
Sacramento, CA 95814
(916) 327-5483

Council of State Policy and Planning Agencies (CSPA)
400 North Capitol Street, N.W. , Suite 291
Washington, D.C. 20001
(202) 624-5386

Institute for the Study of Adult Illiteracy
Pennsylvania State University
243 Calder Way, Room 307
University Park, PA 16801
(814) 863-3777

Laubach Literacy Action (LLA)
1320 Jamesville Avenue
P.O. Box 131
Syracuse, NY 13210
(315) 422-9121

Literacy Volunteers of America, Inc. (LVA)
5795 Widewaters Parkway
Syracuse, N.Y. 13214
(315) 445-8000

GED Testing Service
One Dupont Circle
Washington, D.C. 20005
(202) 939-9490

National Assessment of Educational Progress (NAEP)
Educational Testing Service
Rosedale Road
Princeton, N.J. 08541
(609) 921-9000

National Commission for Employment Policy (NCEP)
1522 K Street, N.W., Suite 300
Washington, D.C. 20005
(202) 833-2530

National Council of State Directors of Adult Education
Division of Adult Education
New York State Department of Education
Washington Avenue
Albany, NY 12234
(518) 474-2121

National Governors' Association (NGA)
444 North Capitol Street, N.W., Suite 250
Washington, D.C. 20001
(202) 624-5300

National Institute for Literacy
800 Connecticut Avenue N.W., Suite 200
Washington D.C. 20006

Project Literacy Plus U.S. (PLUS)
Box 2
Pittsburgh, PA 15213
(212) 887-7079

Public Broadcasting Services
1320 Braddock Place
Alexandria, VA 22314
(703) 739-5000

Push Literacy Action Now (PLAN, Inc.)
1332 G Street, S.E.
Washington, D.C. 20003
(202) 547-8903

SER-JOBS for Progress, Inc.
1355 River Bend Drive, Suite 350
Dallas TX 75247
(214) 631-3999

U.S. Conference of Mayors
1620 Eye Street, N.W.
Washington, D.C. 20006
(202) 293-7330

United Way of America
701 North Fairfax Street
Alexandria, VA 22314
(703) 836-7100

U.S. Department of Education Adult Literacy Initiative (ALI)
Reporter's Building, Room 50
400 Maryland Avenue, S.W.
Washington, D.C. 20202

U.S. Department of Labor Employment and Training
Administration (ETA)
200 Constitution Avenue, N.W.
Washington, D.C. 20210
(202) 376-6750

Appendix G

G-1 Sample Staffing Plans

Staffing for WPL programs will differ based on the nature of the project and the policies or traditions of the provider organization. The following are some staffing structures WPL programs have used. See job descriptions presented in **Chapter 6**.

Sample Staffing Plan A - Minimalist Staffing

This requires staff which are fast on their feet, very experienced in designing and implementing workplace learning programs, and at least full time staff assignments.

Staff	Function (Bundles functions of multiple positions)	Expertise
Program Manager	• Solicits funding • Negotiates contracts • Designs and conducts LNA • Designs WPL program concept • Designs curriculum • Selects materials and equipment • Maintains program MIS • Staff training and logistics • Monitors implementation and communicates with program liaison • Sub-contracts evaluation	• Management and budgeting • Logistics management • LNA and worker competencies • Learner assessment • Program design • Workplace learning program curriculum development • Database design and records management • Staff development communication and marketing and reporting • Subcontract management • Typing and copying and report production
Instructional personnel (may include instructor, aide, and volunteer or tutor)	• Implements curriculum design • Sets up learning environment • Instructs and facilitates • Assesses progress • Maintains records • Reports problems and special learning or learning support needs	• Content areas in focus • Adult education • Functional context instruction • Learner assessment • Records organization and documentation
Evaluator/Assessor	• Designs evaluation • Implements evaluation • Reports evaluation • Works with Program Manager and Planning Team on the above	• Evaluation design, implementation, and reporting

This staffing plan works best for very small programs. Little program support is available. The Program Director will not have time to visit classes and consider how they can be more effective. Thus, instructor quality is crucial. This plan affords little slack for capacity development on behalf of either instructional or managerial excellence.

Sample Plan B - Larger Program Scope

This also requires staff who are well trained, but more resources are made available in the environment to contribute expertise as needed.

Staff	Function	Expertise
Program Manager	• Solicits funding • Negotiates contracts • Designs and conducts LNA • Designs WPL program concept • Supervises development of the curriculum • Consults on selection of materials and equipment • Designs program MIS • Consults on staff training • Monitors implementation and communicates with WPL program liaison • Supervises evaluation	• Management and budgeting • Logistics management • Workplace needs assessment and worker competencies • Program design • Records management • Staff development • Communication and marketing and reporting
Program Coordinator - Curriculum Specialist	• Designs curriculum • Selects materials • Arranges logistics • Monitors instruction • Staff training • Part-time instructor or substitute	• Curriculum expertise • Organizational expertise • Instructional expertise • Training expertise
Instructional Personnel* (*May include instructor, aide, and/or tutor or volunteer)	• Implements curriculum design • Sets up learning environment • Instructs and facilitates • Assesses progress • Maintains records • Reports problems and special learning or learning support needs	• Content areas in focus • Adult education • Functional context instruction • Learner assessment • Records organization and documentation
Evaluator	• Designs evaluation • Implements evaluation • Reports evaluation • Works with Program Manager and Planning Team on the above	• Evaluation design, implementation, analysis, and reporting
Office Support	• Answers the telephone • Purchases materials • Produces documents • Assists in design of MIS • Maintains MIS	• Office management, typing, report production • Database management

This plan is slightly richer in staff (three additional people–the program coordinator, evaluator, and office support). Sometimes the Program Coordinator also teaches a class part time. Not all staff need be full time. The advantages gained from the extra staff are that the instructional process can now be followed more closely, and capacity to respond in a timely fashion to workplace requests may be gained. This plan–minus the evaluator who could be a subcontractor–is probably the minimal required for maintaining the flexibility that workplaces need.

Glossary

Aggregated data. Analyzing and reporting findings in aggregate means that the individual learner is not identified or identifiable. Findings from aggregated data relate to learners in the program as a whole or subgroups as identified by general characteristics, such as amount of participation, time of class, or some other factor.

Assessment. Assessment refers to the process of analyzing skill proficiency. In the context of this manual, assessment refers to measuring both level of competence in basic literacy skills among employees at the workplace and change in level of proficiency from participating in a WPL program. Assessment measures include paper and pencil tests, performance-based measures, curriculum-based measures, and measures based on learners' or instructors' own judgments.

Measures can be criterion-based (a performance standard to be met), norm-based (level of performance compared to others), or subjective (achievement relative to the instructor's standards). Measures also differ based on whether they are standardized (to performance of similar learner populations) or site-specific (refer only to the program site). Decisions about which assessment measures to use, and how to interpret, depend on your curriculum objectives, program design, and characteristics of the individuals whose skills are being examined. Some strategies use multiple measures, such as portfolio-based assessment.

Assessment differs from evaluation. Assessment refers to examinations of an individual's skill competence. Evaluation focuses on the effectiveness and efficiency of program design and implementation (instruction, process, resource and contextual factors) in meeting the targeted program goals.

Basic skills. Basic skills refer to the broad range of competencies necessary to function effectively in the workplace or life outside it. These skills include:

- Communication–vocabulary, grammar, comprehension, writing, speaking;
- Computation–whole numbers, fractions, decimals, percents, ratios, direct measurement, computed measurements, interpretation and compilation of graphic representations;
- Referencing information–using manuals/materials for quick reference, knowing where to look for answers or how to use available information to answer questions;
- Problem-solving and critical thinking–ability to anticipate and solve problems quickly and effectively;
- Functioning effectively in the workplace–interests, attitudes, and values expected on the job and required for safety, competency, productivity, and repeat business.

Class-based instruction. For this manual, it refers to the instructional context where a group of program participants are gathered together, with an instructor or instructional team, at a given time, in a given space, for a given period, in order to enhance their literacy skills. Classes can be of any size, but usually are from about four or five to fifteen participants. Within the class, learners can work individually, in small groups or as a whole with the large group; they can work with tutors,

volunteers or other instructional team members, on materials designed specifically for them or on issues that arise during class discussion.

Client. The client is any organization (public, private, union, etc.) that contracts with an educational provider to deliver a WPL.

Cloze test. This is a specific technique for learner assessment. It is a paper and pencil test where specific words have to be conceived of and written by the learner to appropriately complete a sentence. This technique is used to assess if the learner knows and can apply vocabulary appropriately. It provides some clues to vocabulary application which may limit the interpretation of results.

Company culture. This refers to the style and standards in place at the client's work site–both explicit and implicit. It includes decision making styles, dress codes, desire for documentation of procedures, style of communication, etc. Differences in company culture affect what information they will want to have before making a decision, in what form the information should be, how long the decision process will take, characteristics of a WPL program that will make it well received, and accountability standards.

Competencies or competency-based instruction. Competency refers to the adequate performance of a specific requirement either at work or outside the workplace. In the context of workplace learning programs, competency entails the possession of requisite knowledge, skills, abilities, and attitudes, and the ability to apply them appropriately to perform a specific task or job to meet the required standards. Competency-based instruction is an approach to training which centers instructional strategies around attaining required competencies.

Continuous process improvement. This is a strategy for maintaining program or product quality, periodic quality checks and incremental changes as necessary to maintain quality. In WPL programs, this entails periodic learner assessment and program evaluation, and using the findings to improve the program.

Contract education. This is a vehicle through which public, post-secondary education institutions have provided training targeted to specific companies' needs. Classes usually occur at an adult school or community college; and curricula are tailored to the specific subjects the company wishes taught. Contract education is not usually competency based; nor are the specific needs of the workplace studied prior to designing or developing the course. These characteristics are what principally distinguish it from workplace learning programs. Community colleges may have a slightly different definition of contract education.

Courseware. See Software.

Criterion-referenced test. This is an assessment instrument designed to measure whether a learner has the degree of proficiency to accomplish a specific objective. This often is a paper-pencil test, but does not have to be. It contrasted with norm-referenced test. See **Assessment**.

Cross trained. This is a staffing strategy in which employees are trained to handle multiple jobs or roles.

Curriculum. A plan for achieving program goals and objectives, this should include: a course outline, definitions of lessons, definition of instructional strategy, a description of learner assessment strategy, and a plan for providing learners support services.

Efficiency. Efficiency is relative. It refers to the resource economy required to yield program results. For example, a WPL program which achieves its learning objectives with a majority of the program participants, relatively quickly (ahead of time or as contracted), with a minimum of disruption of the worksite, and relatively inexpensively may be considered efficient. WPL programs should strive to improve their efficiency in order to reduce cost and improve client benefits, both during

program implementation and by examining program design, process and outcomes after the program has ended.

Effectiveness. Effectiveness is relative. It refers to the quality and utility of program outcomes. For example a WPL program which achieves or exceeds its learning outcomes with the full complement of learner participants, where learners retain the skills they learn after the program ends, and where learners can apply them successfully to new tasks and challenges, may be considered effective. WPL programs should strive to improve their effectiveness, both during program implementation and by examining program design, process and outcomes after the program has ended.

ESL/English-as-a-second language. This is an instructional approach developed to address language acquisition needs of learners who have English as a second language. There are specific techniques developed, and different approaches comprise ESL instruction.

Evaluation. Evaluation refers to the process of estimating the impact of a program in reaching its specified goals. In the context of WPL programs, it includes both assessment of learner attainment and the efficiency of the program in facilitating those attainments. Evaluation focuses on the effectiveness and efficiency of program design and implementation (instruction, process, resource and contextual factors) in meeting the targeted program goals.

Five percent rule. This is an informal understanding organizations can use for investing in research and development. It is an investment of 5 percent of profits into product and process improvement. At least 5 percent is required to get meaningful results from a research and development effort. In the context of WPL the rule relates to investment in program evaluation by the provider, as well as program investment by the client.

Focus groups. This technique is used in program evaluation and marketing. It involves forming a group of five to twelve persons and focusing and structuring discussion of a topic when you want to hear participants' attitudes and reactions to a new product or approach.

Functional context approach. In this instructional approach skills are taught in the ways they will be used in a particular setting. The purpose is to make learning more meaningful to the learner and to make outcomes from learning more relevant. It usually accompanies competency-based instruction. Together, they often require altering the sequence in which skills are taught and the combination of skills taught from approaches more suitable to academic settings.

Incentives or participant incentives. This refers to encouragement to become involved in a WPL program, sustain participation in it and use the attained skills from the program. The most powerful and biggest incentives are from management. These include paying workers for half or all of their time involved in program participation, offering a bonus for those workers who meet program performance or graduation criteria, or providing specific opportunities for career development for employees to participate in the program (*e.g.*, chance for promotion if they attain certain skills required for it) or recognizing employee participation and achievement in the company newsletter and through graduation ceremonies.

Individual learning plan. This is a learning management technique which is based on an assessment of an individual's specific skill, learning support and participation support needs to accomplish program objectives. Learning support refers to (a) need for instruction in related fundamental basic and metacognitive skills, (b) encouragement to undertake learning (or see the payoff from it) available to the employee, (c) need for assistance with strategies to overcome learning impediments such as dyslexia, or (d) utility of providing direction for enhancing skills further outside the program (*e.g.*, for a GED). Participation support refers to need for transportation, childcare or elder care which may impede employees attending classes. The plan should incorporate both individual and workplace-based objectives for program outcomes, then specify the activities and performance benchmarks to

fulfill learning plan requirements. Key to successful use of the learning plan is to update it periodically through the program with accomplished skills and newly identified skills or learning needs (if any).

Instrumentation. Instrumentation refers to the data collection forms used for learner assessment and program evaluation. Instrumentation is used in the literacy needs analysis as well as when implementing the program, whether the data collection form is developed by the program itself or from another source. Instrumentation includes the forms used for:

Interviews: for interviewing employee, supervisor, or program staff

Task observation or job shadowing: for identifying skills in use and determining required proficiency

Learner assessment: for testing of skill proficiency or attainment

Instructional observation: for monitoring instructional approach and efficiency

The information requested, wording, format, and use of the data collected are at issue in the decisions you make about the instrumentation appropriate for your program.

Job shadowing. This can be either an assessment technique or an instructional technique. It entails following an employee during actual performance of his or her tasks. Using this technique the assessor can identify specific skills required for the task, skills which should be strengthened, and skills which should be brought in which are not now used. This technique is used during the literacy needs analysis to assess workplace literacy needs. It also is used during the instructional process to assess learner progress and needs.

Job-related context. This refers to the specific context in which the basic skills are to be applied. The definition is the same as functional context for workplace learning programs. Instruction in workplace learning programs folds in the job context by using materials from the job itself or those appropriate to it (signs, manuals, forms) and by teaching the skills in a way which involves the learner in applying them to tasks similar to those required for effective job performance.

Learner assessment. See Assessment.

Literacy needs analysis (LNA). Also called a literacy audit, this refers to a two pronged process for determining type and extent of need for improvement of workers' literacy skills at a workplace for employees to be maximally productive and meet job performance standards. The first part of the process requires assessing what basic skills are required of employees by workplace tasks, and how these tasks are used. The second part of the process is assessing the workers' levels of proficiency in these skills. A literacy needs analysis then reports conclusions about the gap between skills required by workplace tasks and skills employees already possess at the required level, and implications for the utility of a WPL program for the workplace.

Metacognitive skills. These are skills which leverage the ability to apply basic skills to a new context and to continue the learning process. They involve creative thinking, problem-solving interpersonal skills, team-building skills; ability to take on leadership roles; knowing how and when to request assistance and when to respond to similar requests; knowing how to resolve issues with others.

Management Information System (MIS). MIS is an acronym for management information system. It is the use of systematic record-keeping procedures to document and monitor program process and learning progress. Usually MIS is computer based.

Needs assessment. This is an evaluation of Literacy Needs Analysis (LNA) results to determine gaps between existing skills and job performance requirements.

Observation. This is a technique used for program evaluation, and usually refers to class observations of instruction and learning. It can also refer to observation of employee performance and participants' performance on job-related tasks, using newly enhanced skills. Observation, when used as part of evaluation, is a formally structured procedure. It requires pre-thinking the parameters of the observed event, what the recorded data will mean, and how they will be analyzed or used. An observation instrument should be developed that targets what is to be observed, in what ways, and how observations are to be recorded; it then should be tested to see whether data yielded are what were intended; and observers should be trained in the use of the observation instrument.

Occupational analysis. This is a systematic process by which duties and tasks are identified.

Outcomes. Outcomes is used in this Manual as another word for program results–learning attained, enhanced skills, learner satisfaction, or client satisfaction. Sometimes unintended outcomes occur.

Participants. See Program Participants.

Partnerships. This is a term which indicates the shared nature of investment in time, effort and money by the participant, client and the provider. While the relationship between the client and the provider is not a partnership in the legal sense, it does carry with it some of the same requirements for interdependence.

Performance objectives. This is the job-related performance the learner is expected to demonstrate before the WPL program can have achieved its goals with the learner.

Planning Team. This is a group of people from the client and provider organizations created to decide issues related to program start-up and implementation. It can be a group of 2 or more people.

Post-test and Pre-test. Together, these are one way for assessing learning gains from a WPL program. An assessment of learners' levels of proficiency in skills targeted by the program is given to participants at the beginning of the program and at the end of the program (usually a different form of the test or a different test, to rule out inflation of gains due to familiarity with the testing instrument). Change in level of proficiency (such as a gain in test scores) is taken to indicate mastery of targeted skills. The testing measures should use job-related language and style and include assessment of application of skills to job-related problems.

Productivity or performance measures. These refer to an organization's own measures of employees' job performance. They differ both within and across industries (manufacturing, service, government). Examples include product completion rates, scrap rates, error or rejection rates, sales figures, customer satisfaction ratings, sales and hotel vacancy rates, number of clients served or cases completed. Changes in productivity or performance may be a goal of implementing a WPL program. Find out how your program will be judged (what will be indicators of its success). If productivity or performance measures are used, be sure the measures or indicators of performance used are directly affected by your program objectives. Indirect links are likely to weaken or obliterate demonstrated outcomes.

Proficiency or skill proficiency. In this manual proficiency refers to assessed ability to understand when to use and successfully apply a basic skill (to criterion level of acceptance) in the job and task context. Skills refer to basic literacy skills needed in the workplace for effective job performance. At a general level, they include communication, computation, referencing information, problem-solving and critical thinking, functioning effectively in the workplace, and metacognitive skills such as learning to learn (see Chapter 4).

Program documentation. This refers to the records used to document program process and progress, and to substantiate program outcomes. See MIS.

Program monitoring. This is an ongoing process initiated by the provider to track program efficiency and effectiveness. Using program documentation, feedback from staff, clients, and participants, and periodic progress assessment, monitoring is used to distill implications for needed modification of program process or content.

Provider (service or educational). The term refers to the organization that contracts with the client to provide WPL services. It may be an adult school, community college, private-not-for-profit organization, private-for-profit organization, or independent consultant. The services may include the full range of WPL program services or a subset of services. Providers may subcontract for specific services.

Program participants. These are the employees who participate in the WPL program–those who complete and those who drop out of the program.

Screening. In this manual, screening refers to the process of selecting employees who would benefit from a WPL program. It includes following the recruitment plan developed to ensure they meet the minimum criteria of working in specific jobs at specific levels (as indicated in the contract), determining whether they have the skill needs identified in the LNA, and establishing the appropriate program for them to achieve program and learners' goals.

Simulation. This is an exercise that represents a true job situation and allows learners to practice applying attained skills in a job-related context. See skill applications.

Skill applications. This refers to the use of attained or enhanced basic skills in job-related contexts. Such contexts can be computer-based simulations of problems encountered in the workplace. They can be paper-pencil or any other instructional mode. The importance of skill applications is that they are the test of whether targeted skills are learned well enough. The questions posed are whether the learner knows when a skill is needed, whether it can be applied correctly and successfully. The issue also is whether the skill learned can be applied to new contexts.

Software and courseware. These are general terms for computer programs which are used in instruction and other contexts, either as central or peripheral educational tools. Authoring capability is a relevant term here to indicate the flexibility program users have in modifying or adapting a program for specific instructional purposes.

Stakeholders. These are the people with vested interest in the success of a WPL program. They include the providers, subcontractors, client, participants, client non-participant employees (managers, supervisors co-workers), other providers, government agencies and anyone else with an interest.

Structured interviews. These are techniques used in the LNA and program evaluation. They require pre-thinking the parameters of the information desired from the individual; priorities for data to be collected, given time constraints; what the recorded data will mean; and how the data will be analyzed and used. An instrument should be developed and pre-tested for accuracy.

Task analysis. This is a procedure to identify specific characteristics of each task. These can include physical demands, working conditions, tools, equipment, and literacy skills related to them.

Technology-based instruction. This refers to use of computers, multi-media, and/or video in the instructional process. The technology can be used in several different formats. (See Chapter 5.)

In a *laboratory environment*, computers, video, and/or multi-media technology are arranged on tables or in study carrels, program participants come at times which are individually scheduled, to a given space, for an individually scheduled length of time. Access to a laboratory manager or instructional personnel is available, and these staff also may offer small group instruction if they notice learners having common problems with programmed material.

Technology-based instruction without immediate access to instructional personnel also may be offered. In this case kiosks may be located in different parts of an organization or a laboratory may be set up either without instructors present or with presence limited to specific periods during a week. Continuous instructional presence is very expensive, and for some learners may not be necessary. Instruction is monitored through periodic learner-instructor conferences or at the learner's behest, through telephone or computer. These student-computer driven models of instruction are usually more appropriate to learners with fairly well developed basic skills, and who are comfortable with technology.

Video-based instruction often is used to stimulate conversation about a "problem," to help learners be aware of language differences or communication nuances, to test learners' application of listening and comprehension skills. Beyond individual videos, however, closed-circuit instructional television may be used at a site, or arrangements made for supplementing worksite programs with work participants can do outside.

VESL or Vocational English as a Second Language. This refers to an approach toward teaching English as a second language which is centered on vocational needs.

Vocational training. The term refers to the process of teaching technical skills required for a job (welding, typing, etc.). It is distinct from WPL programs, as used in this Manual, because basic literacy skills are not the focus of vocational training. Yet these basic skills may be required on the worksite in order to function successfully in a job.

Workplace learning. WPL, as used in this Manual, is a custom designed program in which employees participate in a basic skills enhancement program to improve their job-performance. The program uses the functional context approach.

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National Employment and Training Associates (NETA)
653 Eason Boulevard, Tupelo, MS 38801

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This paper has been prepared by Pacific Management and Research Associates under Contract 9151 from the Adult Education and Job Training Unit of the Youth, Adult and Alternative Educational Services Division of the California Department of Education. It has been prepared to summarize background information and outline possible policy decisions. The contents do not necessarily reflect the policies of the California Department of Education, Community Colleges, Adult Education Strategic Planning Advisory Committee or other institutions.

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